

# **D.T4.2.2**

## **Feedback reports on Co-Creation workshops Slovenia**

ERDF PP6 – MIZS

ERDF PP15 - STP

ERDF PP2 - Poly4Eml/Anteja ECG

06 / 2022

### Project Information

Project Title: GoDanuBio - 'Participative Ecosystems for fostering the revitalization of rural-urban cooperation through governing Danube Circular Bioeconomy'

Project code: DTP3-471-4.1

Lead partner: BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg GmbH

Start of the project: 01/07/2020

Duration: 30 months

<http://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/godanubio>

### Deliverable Information

Author/-s: Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Styrian Technology Park, Poly4Eml/Anteja ECG

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0.1	22/03/2022	Template for feedback reports on Co-Creation workshops	Biz-up	BIOPRO
0.2	30/06/2022	Feedback report on Co-creation workshop #3 in Slovenia	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Styrian Technology Park, Poly4Eml/Anteja ECG	

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### *Disclaimer:*

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## 1. General information about the co-creation workshop

Date of the workshop	June 16, 2022
Topic of the workshop	Supporting SMEs in their transition to circular (bio)economy
Format of the workshop	In-person
Region/Address	Slovenia
Project partner(s) involved	Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Styrian Technology Park, Anteja ECG/Poly4EmI
Guiding question/theme of the workshop	Supporting SMEs in their transition to circular (bio)economy
Number of participants	22
Type of participants (Target groups) <sup>1</sup> and name of institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- national public authority: Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, SVRK</li><li>- SME: Anteja, Evegreen, Design business svetovanje, Tehnološki park Ljubljana, ICP, Waboost d.o.o., Beti d.d., Citisen, Clera.One, Bright 3R, Avitel d.o.o.</li><li>- Higher education and research: Inštitut za celulozo in papir,</li></ul>
Cooperation with experts (i.e. speakers, external moderators, politician...)	Cooperation with Circular4.0. project

## 2. Objective of the workshop

The theme of the workshop was supporting SMEs in their transition to circular (bio)economy. The objectives were:

- Familiarize the stakeholders with the main results, takeaways and lessons learned from Circular4.0 and GoDanuBio projects.
- Get the input from stakeholders on how to best support SMEs in this transformation and how we can accelerate it
- Bring the stakeholders together to exchange good practices, present some of the business cases and make new business connections.

Expected outputs were:

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<sup>1</sup> Please group the target groups according to the ones listed in page 42 of the Application Form

- dissemination of good practices and business cases and strengthening connections to form new value chains.
- identification of actions needed to accelerate the circular transformation and to strengthen collaboration in Danube and Alpine macroregions.

### **3. Initial situation of your region**

One of the problems that has been identified many times before in the region is that a lot of work is happening in silos. Many companies are trying to implement circular principles and there are many bioeconomy initiatives, but they don't necessarily have the knowledge, resources or support to make a big impact or to scale their business model.

Slovenia has a unique position as having a lot of resources and innovative talent, but this position is not being utilized enough. National strategy is very much oriented towards achieving a circular economy (Smart Specialization Strategy, Deep Demonstration). Therefore, the pressure for change is high and fast flow of knowledge is important. That's why the objective of the workshop was sharing lessons learned, good business cases and getting practical inputs from participants on how to support SMEs in the best way.

### **4. Methods used within the workshop**

Workshop was executed in collaboration with Circular4.0 project, because there was a high synergy identified between the objectives of GoDanuBio and Circular4.0. From Circular4.0, some of the best business cases of transformation to circular (bio)economy were selected to be presented. All relevant stakeholders were invited - SMEs, clusters, policy makers, budget owners...

First part of the workshop was dedicated to presenting outcomes and lessons learned from both GoDanuBio and Circular4.0 projects. 4 selected business cases were presented and a fruitful discussion was held based on them.

Second part was dedicated to getting structured input from all the participants to the question of how to support SMEs in their circular transformation and increase collaboration in the macro-region. Participants were divided into groups of approx. 5 people and were given 5 topics to discuss and write down their inputs on flipcharts:

5. What are the strengths of Slovenian SMEs, what can they contribute into the support ecosystem?
6. What are their weaknesses? Where do they need support?
7. What are the opportunities for Slovenia and Slovenian SMEs in the circular transformation?
8. What are the barriers to this transformation?
9. How can Slovenia better collaborate in the macro-region?

### **5. Lessons learned for next upcoming workshops**

- Active participation in the discussion and co-creation is very important
- Specific cases need to be presented and discussed, knowledge and information needs to travel fast
- Need to make the next step from discussions into action



- It's important to give clear objectives when facilitating participative discussions, otherwise inputs can get too general.

## 6. What did the local or/and regional administration and the citizens expect from the process of participative governance?

Expectations were communicated before the workshop - accelerating the transition of SMEs into circular (bio)economy in the Danube and Alpine regions. Participants attended because they were interested in the two projects/practical cases, because they wanted to build connections and/or because they wanted to participate with their inputs.

Judging by the feedback, we fulfilled these expectations. Participants enjoyed the event, found the discussions interesting and gained value from the presentations.

## 7. Outcome of the co-creation workshops

Outcomes of the workshop were a SWOT analysis of the transformation of SMEs into circular (bio)economy, identified potentials for further action, shared knowledge of promising business cases and outcomes of projects, and new connections formed between the participants, with some of them discussing potential collaborations.

Outcome:	Name:	Stakeholder involved:	Expected duration:	Field of action (bioeconomy in general /rural development/urban rural cooperation)
Initiative	Follow up meeting to discuss financing options	SVRK, VCG.ai	ongoing	bioeconomy in general
Network	Potential collaboration identified between multiple participants	multiple	ongoing	bioeconomy in general
Potential actions identified	Written output from the participatory session where all the participants identified areas of potential future actions	all	ongoing	bioeconomy in general

## 8. Innovation potential for your region

Slovenia has areas of very large potential that have also been pointed out in the discussions on the workshop.

First of all, we're very strong in terms of strategies in place, such as Smart Specialization Strategy and Deep Demonstration, in which Slovenia was chosen as a candidate to become the first country with a fully circular national economy. Smart Specialization Strategy and some of the related instruments have also been presented in the workshop.

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Next, we have very talented labour, a lot of technological knowhow, Slovenia is among the most advanced countries in some technological areas (e.g. blockchain). Due to small scale, we're flexible and can be a perfect innovation sandbox.

Another unique feature is that Slovenia is a part of 3 macro-regions and is at the geostrategic and political junction. It's also a diverse cultural mix, giving it a good foundation for collaboration within the EU.

We're rich in natural resources (wood, water, etc...). Nature conservation and traditional crafts/industries are a part of our value system and can be a part of a strong sustainable "brand".

The business cases presented in the workshop reflected this innovation potential well. But the important thing is actually tapping into that potential - supporting SMEs, collaborating internationally in a way that complements our weaknesses. Participants of the workshop also identified some main areas of weakness where support would be needed:

- **Financing:** there aren't many investor "sharks" that could really help companies penetrate globally. There's also a lack of fit-for purpose financial instruments. Some participants mentioned frustrations with the bureaucratic complexity of public calls and/or criteria that seem to be favourizing specific institutions. Future actions should address this issue - connect SMEs with appropriate sources of financing, support them in the process and make it easier and accessible.
- **Collaboration:** issues with fragmented initiatives, lack of coordination.
- **Internationalization, commercializing innovations:** we have a lot of knowhow in the region, but are bad at commercializing this knowhow. Specifically we're weak in areas such as patenting/IP, systemic identification and support of breakthrough innovations, penetration to global markets, international collaboration, keeping talented employees. Future actions should support identification of breakthrough innovations, acquisition of right knowledge and connections and international expansion.

## **9. Strengths and weaknesses of the process of participative governance**

**Strengths:** active participation increases stakeholders' motivation and engagement, improves information flow and builds bridges for better collaboration. Awareness and initiative is high in Slovenia on institutional and systemic level.

**Weaknesses:** experience and feedback from the workshop (and other similar ones) shows that it's difficult to move from discussions into concrete action. It's good to facilitate open discussions and contribute ideas, but the crucial part is then following up on those ideas.

Attracting stakeholders was slightly difficult, but we attribute those difficulties primarily to the fact that the time slot was in the time of the year where some are very busy finishing up work before the summer, and some are already on summer leave. Maybe it was also due to a lot of events being held in this period, so people don't have the capacity to attend them all.

## **10. Do you plan to use the process of participative governance also in the future?**

All participants agree to continue the discussion and to involve more actors, especially on the regional and national levels.

## **4. Identified opportunities for rural development in your region**

This will be presented in the cumulative report at the end of the project.



## APPENDIX:

### A. Agenda of the co-creation workshop



#### DOGODEK Z DELAVNICO

#### Digitalne tehnologije kot podporniki pospeševanja prehoda v krožno gospodarstvo za MSP v območju Alp in Podonavja

*Circular4.0: Regionalni info dan (D.C.3.1) in  
Regionalna delavnica kapitalizacije CIRCULAR4.0 (D.T4.2.1)*

*&*

*GoDanuBio: krožno (bio)gospodarstvo – soustvarjalna delavnica (D.T4.2.2)*

**Circular4.0 (Interreg Območje Alp): Digitalne tehnologije kot podporniki pospeševanja prehoda v krožno gospodarstvo za MSP v Območju Alp**

**v sodelovanju z**

**GoDanuBio (Interreg Podonavje): Participativni ekosistemi za pospeševanje oživitve sodelovanja med podeželjem in mestom z upravljanjem podonavskega krožnega biogospodarstva**

**četrtek, 16.6.2022 od 9.00 do 14.00**

**Mesto: Tehnološki park Ljubljana, stavba B, dvorana B2/B3 (v živo)**

#### Program

*Moderator: Ram Dušić Hren*

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 8.30 – 9.00  | Registracija in dobrodošlica (kava, čaj, prigrizki)   |
| 9.00 – 9.10  | Pozdrav in uvod, Tehnološki park Ljubljana (TPLJ), vodilni partner Circular4.0 in Ministrstvo za izobraževanje, znanost in šport (MIZŠ), partner projekta GoDanuBio |
| 9.10 – 10.00 | Circular4.0: podpora MSP za transformacijo v krožno gospodarstvo s pomočjo digitalizacije, TPLJ & Institut Jožef Stefan (IJS) in predstavniki podjetij              |
|              | - Ključni rezultati projekta: izvedba usposabljanja Circularity Acceleration Training - CAT4.0 za MSP   |
|              | - Uspešni primeri pilotov krožne transformacije v MSP   |
|              | - Izhodišča za Circular4.0 delavnico (ključni elementi Circular4.0 akcijskega načrta)   |

- 10.00 – 10.15 GoDanuBio: krožna (bio)ekonomija, MIZŠ  
- Ključni dosednji rezultati projekta in dosedanjih delavnic  
- Izhodišča za GoDanuBio delavnico
- 10.15 – 12.30 Circular4.0 & GoDanuBio delavnica: kako pospešiti in podpreti prehod MSP v Sloveniji v krožno gospodarstvo s pomočjo digitalizacije ter iskanje potencialnih sinergij med alpsko in podonavsko regijo za pospešitev prehoda MSP v krožno gospodarstvo  
- Pregled aktualnih in bodočih aktivnosti S3 v povezavi s krožnim gospodarstvom in digitalizacijo za potrebe projekta Circular4.0 in GoDanuBio, Služba vlade za razvoj in evropsko kohezijsko politiko (SVRK), Marko Hren  
- Sodelovanje vseh udeleženih deležnikov na moderirani delavnici
- 12.30 – 13.00 Zaključki delavnice in priporočila za nadgradnjo Circular4.0 akcijskega načrta ter potencialne sinergije s projektom GoDanuBio, Moderator & TPL/ IJS & MIZŠ
- 13.00 – 14.00 Kosilo in mreženje

Dogodek je brezplačen. Za potrebe projektnega poročanja, bomo dogodek snemali.

*Projekt Circular4.0 je sofinanciran s strani Evropskega sklada za regionalni razvoj preko programa Interreg Območje Alp.*

*Projekt GoDanuBio je sofinanciran s strani Evropskega sklada za regionalni razvoj preko programa Interreg Podonavje.*

## B. Invitation to the workshop

<https://www.gov.si/dogodki/2022-06-16-godanubio-krožno-biogospodarstvo-soustvarjalna-delavnica/>

## GoDanuBio: krožno (bio)gospodarstvo – soustvarjalna delavnica

16. 6. 2022 od 9.00 do 13.00

Partnerji projekta GoDanuBio in Circular4.0 vljudno vabimo vse zainteresirane deležnike na dogodek z delavnico na temo pospeševanja prehoda in podpore malim in srednje velikim podjetjem (MSP) v Sloveniji v krožno gospodarstvo s pomočjo digitalizacije, ter iskanje potencialnih sinergij med alpsko in podonavsko regijo za pospešitev prehoda MSP v krožno gospodarstvo. Dogodek bo v četrtek, 16.6.2022 od 9.00 do 14.00 ure na Tehnološkem parku Ljubljana, stavba B, v pritličju - dvorana B2/B3.

Dogodek, ki ga organizirata Ministrstvo za izobraževanje, znanost in šport (MIZŠ) in Tehnološki park Ljubljana (TPLJ) bo potekal v okviru dveh projektov GoDanuBio ([Interreg Podonavje](#)) in Circular4.0 ([Interreg Območje Alpe](#)).

Na dogodku bodo predstavljeni ključni rezultati projekta Circular4.0 ter izbrani uspešni primeri pilotov krožne in digitalne transformacije v Sloveniji, ki so bili identificirani v okviru usposabljanja Circularity Acceleration Training 4.0 (t.i. CAT4.0). Predstavljeni bodo tudi ključni dosedanjí rezultati projekta GoDanuBio, ki naslavlja teme krožnega(bio)gospodarstva v ruralnih območjih. Temu bo sledila skupna Circular4.0 in GoDanuBio soustvarjalna delavnica, kjer bodo predstavljene aktualne in bodoče aktivnosti 55 v povezavi s krožnim gospodarstvom in digitalizacijo, da se uskladijo z aktivnostmi Circular4.0 akcijskega načrta in potrebami projekta GoDanuBio (krožno gospodarstvo na podeželju in biogospodarstvo). Sledili bodo zaključki delavnice in priporočila za nadgradnjo Circular4.0 akcijskega načrta ter potencialne sinergije s projektom GoDanuBio.

Namen Circular4.0 in GoDanuBio soustvarjalne delavnice je **razprava med relevantnimi deležniki** (ministrstva, regionalne agencije in centri, občine, organizacije za podporo podjetništva, sektorske agencije, mala in srednje velika podjetja, velika podjetja, nevladne organizacije itd.) **o pospeševanju prehoda malih in srednjih podjetij (MSP) v Sloveniji v krožno gospodarstvo s pomočjo digitalizacije**. Zbirali se bodo konkretni predlogi za izdelavo akcijskega načrta za alpski in podonavski prostor. Ob spreminjanju se okoljski zakonodaji ter relevantnih okoljskih, družbenih in ekonomskih izzivih je tema prehoda MSP v krožno gospodarstvo s pomočjo digitalizacije še kako aktualna.

Dogodek bo potekal v živo in se je nanj potrebno prijaviti. Vljudno vas prosimo, da se prijavite na [povezavi](#).

Prijave sprejemamo do torka, 14.6 do 14.00 oz. do zapolnitve mest.

Dogodek je brezplačen.

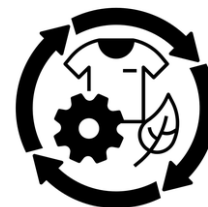
Plačilno parkiranje je na voljo na parkirišču na desni strani ceste nasproti TPLJ.

Dodatne informacije o dogodku:

**Majda Potokar** ([majda.potokar@tp-lj.si](mailto:majda.potokar@tp-lj.si)) in **Peter Kumer** ([peter.kumer@gov.si](mailto:peter.kumer@gov.si))

Vljudno vabljeni.

INSTITUCIJA  
Ministrstvo za izobraževanje, znanost in šport



Krožno gospodarstvo in biogospodarstvo sta koncepta, ki spodbujata kroženje in ponovno uporabo proizvodov, materialov in virov.

### C. Photos from the workshop



### D. Participants' inputs

#### **Where is Slovenia (and Slovenian SMEs) strong? What can they contribute?**

Flexibility  
Topics of S5 (Smart Specialization Strategy)  
Knowhow (technology, bringing innovations to market)  
Digital technologies I5.0 (blockchain etc...)  
Natural resources  
Strong institutional ecosystem  
Location in EU - part of 3 macroregions  
Knowledge, innovative spirit, flexibility  
Affordable price of services  
Values  
Geostrategic and political junction

#### **Where is Slovenia (and Slovenian SMEs) weak? What do they need support?**

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Financing  
Lack of competencies (scale ups, applicative projects)  
Digitalization  
Lack of human resources  
Support with supplies - aggregating purchases  
Joining forces for R&D projects - lack of IP knowledge  
Commercialization of innovations, patents  
Lack of systematic identification of potential innovations  
We don't have the basic infrastructure for processing of wood and fiber  
We don't have fit-for-purpose financial instruments for startups  
Knowledge and expertise is not marketed enough  
Weak internationalization  
We don't have investor sharks that could enable global penetration of SMEs

### **Opportunities for Slovenian companies and Slovenia**

Sharing knowledge  
Good test environment, deep tech  
“Premium sustainable” - a strong niche, brand  
Very good strategic location, good for product and service development  
Conservation of traditional industries  
Greater added value  
Small scale and flexibility  
Resilience and ingenuity  
Diversity  
Nature conservation  
Geostrategic and political junction

### **Barriers to progress**

Poor collaboration and coordination of stakeholders  
Lack of financing for micro-businesses  
Too small for scaleup  
Comfort of self-sufficiency  
Lack of interest of investors for manufacturing and materials  
Unified EU innovation ecosystem can be a barrier - a locally/regionally limited one could be a better fit  
Lack of fit-for-purpose vouchers to cover costs of new products/market development  
War, global trends  
Policy  
Criteria on public calls (favorizing some specific institutions), bureaucratic complexity  
Lack of continuity (clusters, centers of excellence)  
Lack of subsidies for breakthrough solutions  
Filtering of opportunities



Ensuring liquidity/guarantees from banks  
Fragmentation, non-connectedness of initiatives

### **Synergies and opportunities for collaboration of Slovenia in macro-regional context**

Slovenia is an ideal sandbox - if you make it here, you can make it elsewhere (lab for new ideas)

Advantage of Slovenia - we know both macroregions (Alpine and Danube)

Resource-rich and a lot of knowledge and innovations in domains of wood, forestry, water

We have a problem with organization - need for transferring practices from outside

Connecting clusters and associations

Development of international experts

### **E. Press releases of the workshop**

<https://www.tp-lj.si/sl/novice/gradimo-skupnost-kroznega-gospodarstva-znotraj-alpskega-in-podonavskega-prostora-2022-06-30>

The screenshot shows the website of Tehnološki park Ljubljana. The header includes the logo and navigation links: Storitve, Dogodki in novice, Skupnost in podpora, Razvojni projekti, O nas, and a search icon. The main content area features a list of 'Zadnje novice' (Latest news) on the left and a featured article on the right. The featured article is titled 'Gradimo skupnost kroznega gospodarstva znotraj alpskega in podonavskega prostora!' and is dated 30.06.2022. It includes a photo of a workshop and a detailed description of the event. The footer contains a small disclaimer about the website's purpose and a Creative Commons license icon.

**Zadnje novice**

- 28.06.2022  
Razpisana nagrada za inovativne rešitve kroznega gospodarstva!
- 24.06.2022  
Odprti poziv za rešitve za startupe in MSP!
- 22.06.2022  
Slovenski startup leta 2022 je Innolab!
- 20.06.2022  
Konzorcij DIGI-SI prejel status evropskega inovacijskega stičišča - EDIH
- 16.06.2022  
BicyLift je zmagovalna inovativna rešitev tekmovanja Ljubljana Smart Pedal Pitch 2022!

**Gradimo skupnost kroznega gospodarstva znotraj alpskega in podonavskega prostora!**  
30.06.2022

Snovalci projekta **Circular4.0** (Interreg Območje Alp), katerega vodilni partner je Tehnološki park Ljubljana in **GoDanuBio** (Interreg Podonavje) so v juniju prvič združili moči in organizirali skupni dogodek s soustvarjalno delavnico na temo pospeševanja in podpore malih in srednje velikih podjetij (MSP) za čim hitrejši in čim bolj učinkovit prehod v krožno gospodarstvo s pomočjo digitalizacije.

V uvodnem delu dogodka je mag. Marija Čebular Zajec iz Ministrstva za gospodarski razvoj in tehnologijo (MGRT), ki je opazovalec projekta Circular4.0, predstavila ključne instrumente za podporo MSP v Sloveniji za prehod v krožno gospodarstvo.

LinkedIn:



Technology Park Ljubljana

3,776 followers

1d • 🌐

+ Follow

Ponosni in navdušeni, da smo lahko del nastajajoče skupnosti krožnega gospodarstva, ki jo tudi aktivno spodbujamo. 🌱

Kot vodilnemu partnerju projekta **CIRCULAR4.0** nam je skupaj z ostalimi parterji do konca leta 2021 v skupnost krožnega gospodarstva uspelo povezati približno 1.400 deležnikov iz različnih ravni. Hkrati je bilo narejenih okvirno 260 pilotov krožno – digitalne transformacije v malih in srednje velikih podjetjih (MSP) v alpski regiji.

V mesecu juniju smo združili moči z nosilci projekta **GoDanuBio** in organizirali dogodek s soustvarjalno delavnico na temo pospeševanja in podpore MSP za čim hitrejši in čim bolj učinkovit prehod v **#krožno** gospodarstvo s pomočjo digitalizacije. 🍌

Hvala vsem akterjem, več o dogodku in skupnosti si lahko preberete tukaj 📄  
<https://bit.ly/3aaOvnw>

#circulair #circulareconomy

See translation



📍 with Ram Dušić Hren and 3 others



You and 14 others

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