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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 11 June 2021 09:58  
**To:** circulareconomy  
**Subject:** Response to Public Consultation on the circular economy  
**Attachments:** CircularEconomy.pdf

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Please see my response in attached document.

Kind Regards,  
[REDACTED]

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## Responses Public Consultation on Circular Economy

No.	Question	Response
1	Do you agree with the draft Strategy's proposed key objectives? In your view, are there further or alternative objectives that should be included?	I agree with the proposed key objectives. An additional objective should be to include a timeframe that maps out the rollout of those first and second key objectives.
2	Do you agree with the overall level of ambition set out in the draft Strategy? If not, is further ambition needed or is the draft Strategy overly ambitious?	I believe further ambition is needed.
3	Should Ireland measure its progress in achieving a more circular economy relative to its European Union peers? If not, what alternative benchmark should Ireland adopt and why?	There should be both. In the first place Ireland should lay out its own targets in a scheduled plan, which can then be measured in terms of progress. (see 1 other objectives). This plan should be ambitious but workable within the Irish context. In the second instance the plan should be measured against the ambitions and progress of other EU countries and if necessary be adjusted.
4	Would you rate Irish public awareness of the circular economy as high, medium or low? And how important do you think raising public awareness is to further developing the circular economy?	I would rate the awareness of low. It is extremely important for the development of a circular economy to raise public awareness.
5	What are the most effective awareness raising measures that could be taken under the Strategy?	<p>Awareness should be incorporated in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day-to-day childcare and school (from pre-school ECCE to University) – achieved through teaching and learning about circular economy in theory and practice. Part of this should be practical experiences such as separating waste, turning lights/ computers off when leaving a room, returning bottles to the canteen, dealing with food waste: recipes for left-over food, what to do with left over lunch box food, learning to repair, mend and make for example bike repairs, mending clothes, upcycling old clothes, knitting, crochet, rug ragging, wood working etc. This can be incorporated in the curriculum and/ or be delivered through workshops, additional classes/ activities</li> <li>• Green public procurement</li> <li>• Supporting parents in making more sustainable choices for school e.g.</li> </ul>

		<p>not insisting on plastic encased pencils, plastic wallets and pockets, plastic markers, book covers etc. – since more sustainable options are already available. This would also lead to a greater awareness of alternatives amongst students and teachers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting car and bike sharing. Car sharing in particular should be promoted more but must be backed up by facilities being available throughout the country.</li> <li>• Businesses and other public buildings – having systems in place e.g. waste separation systems, deposit-return scheme in canteens, green procurement</li> </ul> <p>Awareness campaigns should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seminars (for businesses and public services) – they could be made mandatory for certain targets</li> <li>• series' of short videos/ audio messages (similar to what has been done for Covid) to be broadcast on TV and radio - general population</li> <li>• series of short videos on social media targeted to teens and young adults</li> <li>• flyers with key information done in a graphic format with short precise information – this can be a booklet with flyers, where each flyer is perforated so it can be separated and put up where suitable e.g. on the fridge, by the bin, on a notice board etc.</li> <li>• go-to website where all the information can be accessed plus where someone can be contacted with specific questions, videos mentioned above should also be available here</li> </ul>
6	<p>Are you satisfied with the proposed stakeholder engagement arrangements in the draft Strategy? Which additional stakeholders (if any), not already part of the Waste Action Group, do you think should be included in the Strategy's implementation?</p>	<p>There seems to be a good balance of stakeholders but there should be an opportunity to include additional stakeholders that may emerge.</p>
7	<p>What do you see as the major economic and/or social co-benefits of moving towards</p>	<p>I see opportunities for small and medium businesses in the areas of repair, sharing,</p>

	<p>a more circular economy in Ireland, so that environmental improvements also provide economic and social opportunities, and vice versa?</p>	<p>mending but also producing more local and sustainable products. I also see a big chance for new large Irish businesses in particular in the areas of waste, agriculture and textiles to provide vital roles within the circular economy. Due to the large Agri sector in Ireland there are great opportunities in particular in animal waste recycling and producing more plant-based and organic produce locally. This then leads also to opportunities in alternative packaging and less environmental impact.</p>
8	<p>What do you see as the major regulatory barriers to the further development of the circular economy in Ireland? In answering this question please feel free to address economy-wide issues or those affecting your sector in particular.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Providing the necessary Infrastructure to put the circular economy into practice is a major concern. There are two major issues with that and they are: a) availability - providing the infrastructure all over Ireland and b) time - providing that infrastructure quickly</li> <li>2. Bureaucracy is my second major concern, and ties in with the above. That is in particular where small businesses or community groups are concerned. Setting up a business or community group to contribute to the circular economy should be straightforward. Required documents could be compiled in a pack to make the process easier. Having a manageable process will benefit smaller towns and villages, so that facilities can emerge and grow.</li> <li>3. Building regulations may also be an issue for smaller businesses</li> <li>4. Funding for new and existing businesses, such as grants should be made available.</li> <li>5. Other Spaces: Health and Safety regulations, Data protection and garda vetting would be issues that may concern community groups, particularly if working with children – the process of setting up should be straightforward (as above)</li> <li>6. Enforcement and Fines – there should be a robust system in place that deals with issues of non-compliance</li> </ol>
9	<p>What do you see as the major non-regulatory barriers to the further</p>	<p>I can see the following barriers :</p>

	<p>development of the circular economy in Ireland? In answering this question please feel free to address economy- wide issues or those affecting your sector in particular.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. availability of services and facilities – to create and sustain the circular economy it is vital that facilities and services are available throughout Ireland, including villages and towns</li> <li>2. buy in from the wider public – this is closely linked to point 1</li> <li>3. availability of suitable buildings and community spaces</li> <li>4. the price of goods and services must be realistic, that does not mean that is has to be cheap. This is also an area that the public must become more aware of. The difference between value and cheap is important to communicate as is the cost of production/ provision of a service. Many people are unaware of that.</li> <li>5. Transport – getting to the facility or service using sustainable means. I believe that the circular economy is closely linked to the wider move towards sustainable living and in particular transport. Transport is already an issue both in cities and rural settings. Cycling, public transport as well as bike and car sharing should be on top of the list to link in with the circular economy.</li> </ol>
10	<p>How important do you consider Green Public Procurement is in supporting the development of new circular goods and services?</p>	<p>This is absolutely essential and should be one of the most important goals. Since public procurement has already changed in the last number of years, and regulations have been put in place this should be a further step.</p> <p>In particular in the area of electronic goods there is room for improvement. This starts with the procurement of new computers for example, where repairability, longevity and low energy use should be paramount. It continues with scheduling computers to turn off automatically at the end of the day, and it ends by re-distributing/ reusing and recycling old computers, that otherwise (as is the case now) will land in a skip and possibly in landfill.</p> <p>Other areas of concern are photo copying, printing, re-usable/ repairable/ recyclable stationary, cleaning products and waste management.</p>
11	<p>What would be the most effective action Government could take to promote/support and incentivise the further development of the circular economy?</p>	<p>Put workable system in place by investing in the development of :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. modern recycling and waste management facilities , where there</li> </ol>

		<p>is an adequate number of these facilities throughout the country</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. This should be coupled with an improved waste collection system for households and businesses (for example having separate bins for paper/ cardboard etc. so that it becomes easier for the householder to successfully separate recyclables – No more washing and drying yogurt pots – spoon-clean will do then). Increase the frequency of waste collection from once every two weeks to every week. Waste collection companies should then be able to fulfil certain requirements, such as providing brown bins to every household that requires them.</li> <li>3. a more sustainable agri sector including the recycling of animal and food waste</li> <li>4. The deposit-return scheme should be more ambitious and should include glass recycling/ re-use. Setting up a circular glass re-use system, similar to that in Germany, could be a great opportunity for new business producing and recycling the glass bottles and jars and it would be interesting for local producers in terms of sustainable packaging.</li> <li>5. Minimal bureaucracy for business and community groups in setting up and running their facility or service</li> <li>6. Investing in Education about the circular economy and its opportunities</li> <li>7. Incentivising the public by promoting the circular economy from a monetary point of view</li> </ol>
12	<p>Which sectors do you think can make the biggest contribution to making Ireland's economy more circular?</p>	<p>I see the following sectors having the potential to be the biggest contributors (most import first):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agriculture and Food</li> <li>2. Waste</li> <li>3. Packaging – re-usable and easily recyclable packaging such as glass and tins</li> <li>4. Manufacturing</li> <li>5. Tourism</li> <li>6. Education</li> <li>7. Services and facilities</li> </ol>

13	<p>Do you broadly agree with the policy areas listed for future development in the draft Strategy? If not, which areas would you remove/add to the list?</p>	<p>I broadly agree but would add the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The link with transport is a major issue that should be explored in great detail and incorporated more. Car and bike sharing are a good starting point but cycling infrastructure, in rural places in particular, should be top of the list.</li> <li>2. Paper and Cardboard should have their own bins, so that separating recyclables becomes more attractive, where spoon clean plastics are ok and we can get away from washing and drying. This I believe is one major stumbling block for households.</li> <li>3. Textile recycling – there are no facilities for recycling clothes that are un-wearable, and they are badly needed. I can see a good opportunity here for businesses to get involved in that sector, which in other countries already exists.</li> <li>4. Glass manufacturing and recycling as mentioned in my answer to question 11.</li> <li>5. There are obstacles in the area of waste particular in small rural settings when it comes to food waste collection and disposal or utilisation/ recycling. In our area for example we cannot get a compost bin, as neither of the waste companies will provide these. In the city, which is only 20-min away these bins are provided by same company, which also advertises the fact they have a composting facility. Our food waste therefore has to go in the black bin if, as is the case for us and most of my neighbours, you don't have your own compost heap. That food waste then ends up in landfill. Since we do not have much landfill waste, I would say about 90% of the waste in our black bin is food.</li> </ol>
14	Any other comments?	