

INTERREG
EUROPE

CORE

No. 1



Composting in Rural Environments

Interreg
Europe



Co-funded by
the European Union

CORE

INTRO



Kick-off meeting in Ciudad Real

CORE - COMPOSTING IN RURAL ENVIRONMENTS

CORE is a project co-funded by **Interreg Europe**. It focuses on the promotion and mainstreaming of composting and anaerobic digestion, in rural areas across Europe. The presentation of good practices for the prevention and recycling of bio-waste from eight European countries will facilitate the improvement of policy instruments for the treatment of source-separated and separately collected bio-waste, as well as their sustainable utilisation. The project is expected to **serve as a catalyst for rural territories to improve biowaste management and curtail the practice of landfilling or incinerating biowaste to a considerable extent.**



**1,843,714 €
budget**



**01 Mar 2023-
31 May 2027**

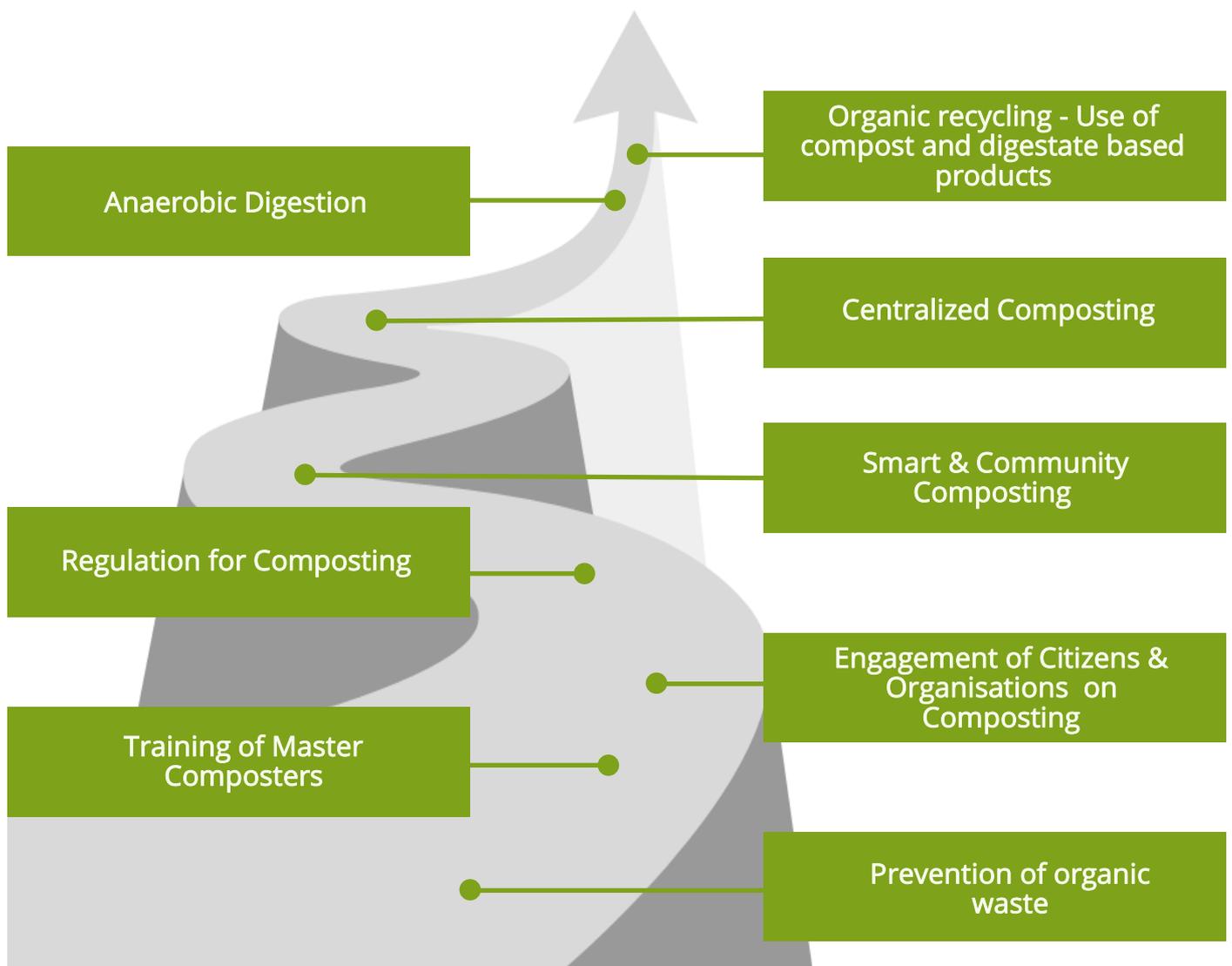


9 partners

MAIN GOALS

MAIN GOALS:

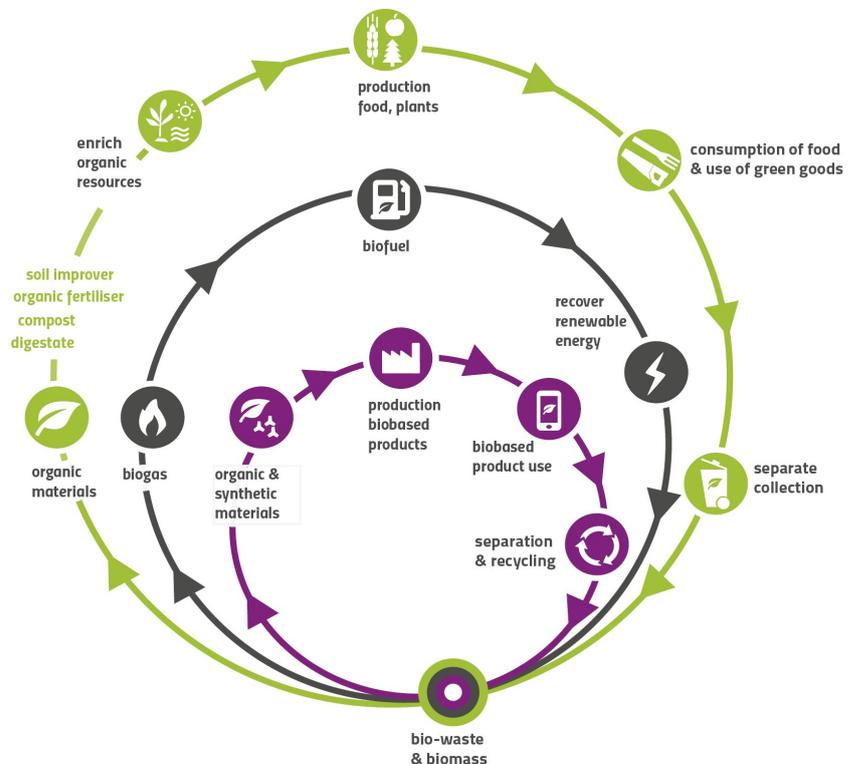
- I. Mainstreaming compost in rural areas
- II. Develop and share best practices to support biowaste management in rural areas
- III. Furthering the goal of a circular bioeconomy



CIRCULAR BIOECONOMY

The management of the organic fraction in rural areas with low-density population is environmentally and economically impactful. Different solutions are required to collect, transport and treat sustainably small amounts of organic waste dispersed in distant and sparsely populated villages.

Food waste prevention, source separation and sustainable management of bio-waste through composting and anaerobic digestion contribute to the fight against climate change by reducing greenhouse gases from land-filling or incineration of bio-waste.



Biowaste can be used to produce renewable energy as well as recycled organic soil improvers and fertilisers.

The compost produced can be used as a soil improver in regional and local parks and gardens, but also to improve soil fertility on agricultural land. Digestate is mainly used as an organic fertiliser, replacing mineral fertilisers in agricultural management practices.

Despite the fact that regional and local policies observe all the transition to circular economy and guide the transitioning of the waste management sector towards it, sustainable treatment of biowaste is often not sufficiently developed, notwithstanding its potential to comply not only with circular economy but also with the mitigation of climate change.

CORE aims at rural low-density territories and leading the process of spreading and mainstreaming the treatment of biowaste. The compost produced can be used for soil improvements in local greens and gardens and as well in agriculture. The project is expected to be an accelerator for rural territories to increase composting and the overall prevention of landfilling or burning of biowaste significantly.

Project Video

Please watch the project video [here](#).

PROJECT PARTNERS



PROJECT PARTNERS

LEAD PARTNER | SPAIN

RSUSA - Waste Management Castilla La Manche



The creation of the R.S.U. Consortium of the province of Ciudad Real was promoted by the Provincial Council at the end of the 1980s. It was set up as a tool at the disposal of municipalities to provide an environmentally correct response to the problem of waste management.

In a very short time, most of the municipalities in the province have joined, almost all uncontrolled landfills have been sealed, three sanitary landfills have been built and the necessary infrastructure for mechanised waste collection has been provided to the municipalities.

Today, almost 300 employees ensure that almost 400,000 citizens receive a quality service that aims to provide the highest possible level of protection for the natural environment and public health.

The Consortium manages the service through a 100% public company (Residuos Sólidos Urbanos de Castilla La Mancha, S.A., R.S.U., S.A.). This is a company that is wholly owned by the Diputación and the municipalities that are members of the Consortium. As a public company, its primary objective is not only economic, but also to serve the local authorities as a modern and efficient tool in the quest for good services and the protection of nature.

RSU's Track Record in Biowaste Management



PROJECT PARTNERS

LEAD PARTNER | SPAIN

RSUSA - Waste Management Castilla La Manche

RSU has 6 waste transfer centres for the collection and transfer of municipal waste. They are located in

- Ciudad Real
- Valdepeñas
- Almodóvar del Campo
- Villanueva de los infantés
- Almadén
- El Robledo

Urban Waste Treatment Center
of Almagro

The citizens, institutions, and workers of R.S.U., S.A. dedicate their efforts to continuously advancing and improving day by day.



PROJECT PARTNERS

GERMANY

LfU - State Office of Environment Brandenburg



Landesamt für Umwelt

The State Office of Environment of Brandenburg, Germany (Landesamt für Umwelt, LfU) was established in 1991 to protect and improve the environment. About 900 persons are working in the LfU at more than 30 different sites. Within Brandenburg the LfU is responsible for several tasks, including pollution control and soil protection, waste and water management, and general environmental concerns. The LfU is also responsible for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers.

The Department of Waste Management is part of the Technical Environmental Protection Division. The Department of Waste Management evaluates waste generation, treatment, recycling and disposal and thus the effects of the application of the Waste Management Plan (WMP), the policy instrument addressed by the project. From this position, the LfU assesses the feasibility of the WMP objectives and advises the Brandenburg Ministry for the Environment and Climate Protection (MLUK) on the processes for updating the WMP. In addition, the LfU is responsible for the approval and supervision of treatment plants for organic waste that are subject to the Federal Immission Control Act and is therefore a technical expert in this field. Finally, the LfU advises citizens and businesses on waste management and recycling.

The LfU, which monitors the implementation of the WMP, is in regular contact with the Public Waste Management Authorities in the region, who are the stakeholders and the main target group to be addressed by the project funds.



PROJECT PARTNERS

GERMANY

LfU - State Office of Environment Brandenburg

The overall organic waste collected in Brandenburg was 223,087 Mg (in 2020), treated locally by composting and partly fermentation, producing compost and electricity. The average collection rate in Brandenburg of organic wastes is 88 kg/capita and year (27 kg organic waste from door to door collection and 61 kg waste from greeneries brought to the collection sites; statistics of 2020).

Project Achievements

The LfU has accomplished so far:

- Participation in 3 partner meetings with thematic seminars and study visits organized by the partners from Italy, Spain and Belgium
- Presentation of 3 good practices, with 2 published on the project website.
- Organization of 3 stakeholder group meetings, sharing information learnt from the good practice of the project partners
- Sharing of lessons learnt with staff in regular in-house meeting of the department.
- Production of a thematic analysis regarding the status quo in Brandenburg with the main statistics of biowaste management, identifying strengths and weakness of biowaste management in Brandenburg.
- Creation of a network of local stakeholders, who are highly interested to maintain regular meetings for exchange of experience and discussion of means to improve biowaste management
- Intention of publicity campaign to improve quality of biowaste from door-to-door collection in 2025 or 2026
- Intention of the production of a brochure for citizens and multipliers by the LfU, giving information of home composting, waste separation and the benefits of using the biowaste bin in addition to home composting, applicable for all counties in Brandenburg
- Inclusion of a statement of intent in the actual waste management plan to include lessons learnt from CORE in the next actualization of the waste management plan



PROJECT PARTNERS

BELGIUM

Vlaco npo



Getting more out of the organic cycle

Vlaco npo was founded in 1992, to support and implement the policy of biowaste (green waste, vegetable, fruit and garden (VFG) waste and biowaste from food and biobased industry). Vlaco is a membership organisation with representation of both the Flemish government (by means of the OVAM and the intermunicipal waste associations) and the private sector (private waste treatment companies). Amongst its members are 80 companies which compost, digest or biothermically dry biowaste and residual flows. All waste treatment techniques are best available techniques and monitored as such through Vlaco's quality control. This quality assurance contributes to Vlaco's in-depth knowledge of the availability, the reasoned use, and the agronomic, economic and ecologic benefits of compost, digestate and the other end products of its members. Vlaco is a member of ECN (European Compost Network) and supports a European QAS (Quality Assurance Scheme).

All of Vlaco's activities are intended to defend the interests of the sector and support the sustainable material cycle of biowaste. Vlaco emphasizes the quality of recycling biowaste (both at home on small scale and professionally on large scale) and (co-) conduct research projects on optimised closing of the biowaste cycle. Specifically on the small scale perspective Vlaco focuses on raising awareness and presenting different tools to intermunicipal waste organisations and directly to households regarding food waste prevention and biowaste recycling techniques at home. Together with the inter-municipalities, Vlaco trains volunteers, who in their turn spread the recycling message.



PROJECT PARTNERS

BELGIUM

Vlaco npo

Project Achievements

Vlaco drafted and presented two 'Good Practices' (on master composters and on professional VFG-waste predigesting and composting) at the 1st Thematic Seminar (TS1) in Ciudad Real (E) (3/2023).



By the end of the 1st semester Vlaco introduced a third (prevention of organic waste) and fourth (Flemish mgt. & regulations on composting) practice which were shared during the 2nd Thematic Seminar in Bolzano (It) (9/2023). All 4 practices were chosen as 'best practices', uploaded to the CORE website and found inspirational by many partners for future replications. Vlaco organized and hosted a successful third Thematic Seminar in Flanders (B) in May 2024 which had a lot of media coverage. The first good practice (Vlaco) on 'Retraining master composters to closed loop garden management advisors' was explained in a partnership between Vlaco and its stakeholder IDM.

Since the start of CORE Vlaco held several in-person meetings with its Flemish stakeholders - including the associated policy authority OVAM (public Waste Agency of Flanders) - prior and after each Thematic Seminar. The 1st meeting centred around disseminating the lessons learnt from the Thematic Seminar in Ciudad Real. Vlaco also gathered more input on possible sites and techniques to show CORE-partners as well learning points of interest from the Stakeholder Group. The 2nd stakeholder meeting highlighted the practices identified in Bolzano (TS2) presented a compiled document with the thematic analyses of all CORE-partners. As a follow-up task to the meeting all participants were asked to screen CORE's Thematic Analyses of the other partners, and inform Vlaco of potential additional practices for future Thematic Seminars. A 3rd stakeholder meeting reunited the major intermunicipal members (stakeholders of CORE) to review all previous practices and lessons learnt particularly from the 3rd Thematic Seminar (Flanders).

PROJECT PARTNERS

BELGIUM

Vlaco npo

Vlaco co-hosted an outdoors 3-day event (6-8/10/2023) 'Tuindagen' at Beervelde (B): at which it demonstrated all principles and techniques related to the Biocycle at Home and Closed Loop Gardening i.c. demonstration and educational materials (online and physical) including home-composting and reduction of food loss.

Vlaco's role in the good practice of 'composting at home' as well as Vlaco's tutorial video on the subject were commented & taken up (end of 2023) by the city of Mechelen (CITISYSTEMS project) in the PLP good practice database.

Vlaco checked the database of the good practices and found interesting references to biowaste related practices, peer reviews, or matchmaking events that bear resemblance to the CORE ambitions. Some of these practices were picked up and were discussed at the PLP sessions of 23 April 2024 and 30 April 2024 – to which Vlaco invited all of the Flemish relevant (composting) members & stakeholders. Vlaco itself attended three sessions from the Policy Learning Platform (PLP):

- 'Unlocking innovation: Regions as laboratories of policy experimentation' (12/2023)
- 'From biowaste to resource I: Exploring methods to increase biowaste collection' (4/2024). This PLP included CORE's good practice of CORE-partner Municipality of Söderhamn (Sweden) on 'Food waste collection and anaerobic digestion system for biogas and biofertilizer'.
- 'From waste to resource: II: Innovative biowaste treatment solutions' (4/2024). This PLP included ECN's introductory key note speech 'The importance of high quality biowaste', CORE's good practice of CORE-partner Province of Bolzano (Italy) on 'Anaerobic digestion of organic waste'. Finally the City of Mechelen (B) translated much of the data and info given by Vlaco in their presentation on 'Composting at home'.



PROJECT PARTNERS

POLAND

Marshal Office of Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship



ŚWIĘTOKRZYSKIE
VOIVODESHIP

The Marshal Office of the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship in Kielce is an auxiliary institution for the Board and the Marshal of the Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship. Currently, it consists of 18 departments and supervises many regional institutions responsible for such domains as: health, culture, transport infrastructure, environment, education, local heritage and European Funds.

The scope of tasks of the Department of Agriculture, Climate and Environment in the field of waste treatment includes planning and monitoring waste treatment in the Świętokrzyskie Region, keeping statistics on waste management and analyzing them, verification of the levels of recycling of municipal waste obtained by 102 municipalities in the region, verifying environmental fees, inspections, conducting information and educational activities.

The Department of Agriculture, Climate and Environment conducts standardization and regulatory activities for waste management in the province. It drafts and updates the Waste Management Plan, which shapes municipal waste management in the Świętokrzyskie Region. The plan is an image of the environmental policy created at the regional level, including investment needs in the field of waste management. This document assumes the implementation of mainly investment tasks, the implementation of which should contribute to the optimization of waste management systems and the achievement of many ambitious goals.

In the Świętokrzyskie region, the biowaste fraction constitutes approximately 30% of all municipal waste. It is estimated that 1 resident of the voivodeship in 2022 generated 131 kg of bio-waste which are mainly processed in home composters. In 2022, approximately 50% of residents had home composters (162,893 pieces), in which 64 thousand Mg of bio-waste were managed. In 2022, 21,8 thousand Mg of Bio-waste were also processed in 6 Regional Waste Treatment Plants, which operate 6 waste composting plants and 1 methane fermentation installation. To sum up, over the last three years, there has been a gradual increase in the weight of collected and received bio-waste.

PROJECT PARTNERS

POLAND

Marshal Office of Swietokrzyskie Voivodeship

Project Achievements

The Marshal Office of Świętokrzyskie region has accomplished so far:

- Participation in 3 thematic seminars and study visits organized by the partners from Spain, Italy and Belgium
- Presentation of 5 good practices, with 2 published on the project website.
- Organization of 2 stakeholder group meetings, sharing information learnt from the good practice of the project partners
- Preparation of Thematic analysis in the field of biowaste in Świętokrzyskie region
- Preparation the brochure for citizens giving information of home composting and using compost
- Organization lectures, conferences and workshops



PROJECT PARTNERS

HUNGARY

CTRIA - Central Transdanbian Regional Innovation



For over 15 years, the Central Transdanubian Regional Innovation Agency (CTRIA) has led innovation management in Hungary, excelling in co-creation, entrepreneurship, social value creation, and green and digital twin transitions.

CTRIA's mission is to empower businesses and organizations by leveraging the latest economic and social advancements. Their approach combines technology, design thinking, and entrepreneurship, serving sectors such as e-health, the food industry, digital entrepreneurship, youth competence development, and the green economy. They identify improvement areas and develop scalable, sustainable solutions.

CTRIA is committed to green industries and sustainability, with experience in policy development and material-cycle solutions like reuse, recycling, and upcycling. They collaborate with partners within the quadruple helix model to create sustainable solutions that transcend regional boundaries.

Since its inception, CTRIA Nonprofit Ltd. has focused on green and sustainability projects, adapting successful international initiatives to Hungary's context. The agency raises awareness to help society recognize and support the green transition's importance and benefits.

Encouraging businesses to embrace the green transition is a key objective for CTRIA. They foster this shift to achieve broader green goals and ensure enterprises' sustainable operation. Through effective projects, CTRIA contributes to environmental protection and social responsibility, aiming for a sustainable future.

CTRIA is more than an innovation agency; it is a catalyst for change. By creating platforms for collaboration and knowledge sharing among professional organizations, the agency fosters a community dedicated to sustainability. CTRIA's commitment to driving the green transition and supporting sustainable practices positions it as a leader in the field, paving the way for a brighter, more sustainable future for all.

Partner achievements

In the spring of 2024, stakeholders began the collaborative work now referred to as the "Veszprém pilot project", which includes the adaptation of good practices observed abroad. The main goal of this initiative is to establish and install community composters in Veszprém, along with implementing associated mindset-changing and educational activities.

PROJECT PARTNERS

HUNGARY

CTRIA - Central Transdanbian Regional Innovation

Within the framework of these activities, the following have been accomplished:

Educational Materials: Comprehensive resources have been developed to inform and educate the community about the benefits and proper practices of composting, covering various aspects of composting from basic principles to advanced techniques.

Public Brochure: A brochure has been designed to provide essential information about the community composting initiative. This brochure is distributed widely to raise awareness and encourage participation among the residents of Veszprém. It includes details about the project's objectives, the benefits of composting, and guidelines for getting involved.

Community Composters and Information Boards: Community composters have been designed and constructed, each accompanied by informative boards that provide instructions and tips for effective composting. These boards serve as on-site educational tools, helping users understand the process and maintain proper composting practices.

Installation and commissioning of composters in two urban areas in Veszprém: The composters have been strategically placed in two urban areas of Veszprém, making them easily accessible to residents. These composters are now up and running, allowing the community to actively participate in the composting process and experience its benefits first-hand.

Dissemination Events: Two events have been organized to disseminate information about the project and engage the community. The events include workshops, presentations, and interactive sessions where participants can learn more about composting, ask questions, and share their experiences. The aim was to foster a sense of community involvement and support for the initiative.



PROJECT PARTNERS

AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF BOLZANO (South Tyrol) - ITALY

Environmental and Climate Protection Agency - Waste Management Office (WMO)

AUTONOME PROVINZ
BOZEN - SÜDTIROL
Landesagentur für Umwelt
und Klimaschutz



PROVINCIA AUTONOMA
DI BOLZANO - ALTO ADIGE
Agenzia provinciale per l'ambiente
e la tutela del clima

The Environment and Climate Protection Agency of South Tyrol is tasked with protecting and managing all environmental issues (Water, Air, Waste & Soil, Noise, Energy & Climate, Radiation, Food and Product safety, Environmental assessment, Environment & Health). As the Environmental Authority for South Tyrol within European Programs, its main role is to integrate environmental aspects into all areas of action of the Funds from a sustainable development perspective, ensuring conformity with EU policy and legislation.

The Waste Management Office (WMO) within the Agency conducts standardization and regulatory activities for waste management in the province. It drafts and updates the Waste Management Plan, the policy instrument addressed in the CORE Project. Moreover, the WMO has experience in the management (planning, implementation and advising) of waste and waste treatment plants in the territory, provides authorizations and advises on plants construction and management. The WMO also supervises plant operations and legal compliance of input material and final products.

South Tyrol collects almost 60,000 tonnes of organic waste annually, almost all treated locally through composting and fermentation, producing high-quality compost and biogas. Nine decentralized composting plants and a central anaerobic digestion plant enable local treatment of most organic waste, with minimal waste treated outside the province.

In the CORE Project, the WMO will share 30 years of experience in organic waste management through composting and anaerobic digestion in an area with more than 500.000 inhabitants.

Learning from other partners, it aims to close the organic waste cycle by processing digestate from biofermentation in composting plants, develop a methodology for quantifying food waste in South Tyrol, and increase the composting rate of green waste in small rural plants.

PROJECT PARTNERS

AUTONOMOUS PROVINCE OF BOLZANO (South Tyrol) - ITALY

Environmental and Climate Protection Agency - Waste Management Office (WMO)

Project Achievements

The Autonomous Province of Bolzano has accomplished so far:

- Participation in international meetings with thematic seminars and study visits by technicians from the WMO and stakeholders, with the drafting and presentation of 4 best practices published on the project website.
- Production of a thematic analysis on the South Tyrol's status quo, identifying strengths and areas for improvement in less advanced aspects.
- Development of a methodology for calculating food waste in South Tyrol.
- Creation of a network of local stakeholders to serve as a source of inspiration for the identification of critical issues and topics to be addressed in the next international meetings.
- Realization of local actions to raise awareness on proper organic waste collection, including a compost information day and an open day at the anaerobic digestion plant.
- Production of two short videos filmed at the organic waste treatment plants (composting and anaerobic digestion) an animated infographic video on the different organic waste treatment processes (composting and anaerobic digestion),
- Production of a leaflet with all the information on the correct separation of organic waste, the destination of organic waste according to the municipality of residence, the products obtained from organic waste according to the processing technology and annual quantities of organic waste and compost produced in South Tyrol, published on the CORE website and distributed to municipalities.
- Inclusion in the new draft of the waste management plan under development (by 2026) of:
 - Topics related to measuring food waste and measures to be taken to reduce it;
 - A study to be implemented for closing the loop on the digestate from the Lana anaerobic digestion plant in composting plants in South Tyrol, inspired by what was seen during study visits and learnt in thematic seminars.
- Development of training and refresher courses for composters, based on insights gained from study visits and thematic seminars.

Local action: Compost Infoday



Click here for a video on composting



Local action: Guided visit at anaerobic digestion plant



Click here for a video on anaerobic digestion



PROJECT PARTNERS

SWEDEN

Municipality of Söderhamn



The municipality of Söderhamn is located along the coast in the region of Gävleborg. The area of the municipality is 1,431 km², of that area about 87% is forest land, 5% is built-up and landscaped land and 5% is agricultural land. The municipality has 24,858 citizens, of whom about 50% live in the central town of Söderhamn.

In the CORE project, the Municipality of Söderhamn will be addressing the Cycle Plan 2021-2025 which is the key policy document for the Municipality when it comes to sustainable waste management and resource use. The purpose of the plan is to, based on Agenda 2030, national environmental goals, regional goals and strategies, contribute to sustainable waste management and resource use, reduce waste and develop a sustainable consumption of goods and services. The measures in the cycle plan aim for Söderhamn to be a cleaner municipality that reduces its climate footprint and contributes to increased community involvement in consumption and waste.

In the Municipality of Söderhamn, the collection of household food waste started in 2012 and was implemented between 2012-2014. The system is managed by the Municipality's own infrastructure company Söderhamn Nära, who is one of the Stakeholders in the project. The other stakeholder is Gästrike Återvinnare/Ekogas - the biogas plant that produces biogas and biofertilizers.

Söderhamn's municipality aims to learn from the other partners' good practices to mainstream food waste management throughout the municipality in order to achieve our goals. Our main aim is to increase the amount of collected food waste for recycling due to higher grades of correctly sorted material without increasing the total amount of food waste. Another aim is also to increase the purity of the sorted material from any plastic residue. Today the purity is about 96 % with a target of 98%.

PROJECT PARTNERS

SWEDEN

Municipality of Söderhamn

Project Achievements

No specific implementations/developments achieved yet...

...but, we have started conversations on several levels to discuss possibilities to collaborate to achieve good things within the project:

- Meetings within the organization, with other departments to discuss food waste management in our schools, and how we could reach out to the children through different activities and campaigns.
- Seminars with local actors where we discussed needs and demands for more small-scale management of green waste and composting, as well as small-scale circular cultivation for education and social values.
- The municipalities in Region Gävleborg have a collaboration regarding the work with their cycle plans. We have raised these topics both within the municipal and regional cycle plan group to inspire, identify our needs, and see how we can work together. Several municipalities also send their food waste to the same regional biogas plant, Ekogas.



PROJECT PARTNERS

GREECE

CluBE - Cluster of Bioeconomy and Environment of Western Macedonia



The Cluster of Bioeconomy and Environment of Western Macedonia (CluBE) is a non-profit legal entity established in 2014 among local actors and stakeholders of the Region of Western Macedonia, Greece.

The mission of CluBE is to enhance collaboration and increase regional knowledge by promoting innovation and synergies between regional stakeholders in the fields of bioeconomy and environment.

CluBE is developing R&D and business activities in the fields of bioeconomy, bioenergy and environment, in order to reinforce smart, bio, green and circular economy in the region and the neighboring areas, namely through:

- Energetic exploitation of biomass for household and industrial use, and especially for district heating systems for small, medium or large cities
- Mobilisation of regional biomass supply chains
- Development of the green hydrogen economy
- Increase of the share of biofuels in the energy mix of transportation fuels
- Co-firing biomass with lignite in existing power stations and/or future heating plants
- Optimisation of heating systems
- Improvement of energy efficiency for households, public and private buildings.
- Promotion of the concepts of smart cities and villages.
- Support of the entrepreneurship in the field of circular bioeconomy

PROJECT PARTNERS

GREECE

CluBE - Cluster of Bioeconomy and Environment of Western Macedonia

The Region of Western Macedonia has a population of 255.056, and covers a total surface of 9.451 km² (7,2% of the country's total). The nature of the region is mountainous, with Aliakmonas river crossing through the entire Region. Western Macedonia is situated in the northern part of Greece and it is the only region without a sea coast. The productive character of the Region is determined primarily by the energy industry and secondarily by the fur industry. Other important economic activities in the area, which is gaining importance in the current transition phase, are the agrifood sector and the marble mining.

The Region of Western Macedonia, participating in the CORE project as an associated partner, is the responsible authority for the policy instrument. CluBE, through its recent participation in the CORE project, aspires to expand its expertise about composting and to include it in the good practices it applies.

During the CORE meeting in Flanders, CluBE presented a Good Practice related to the valorisation of spent coffee grounds. The "Pilot Collection of Spent Coffee Grounds" in Western Macedonia focuses on mobilizing the HoReCa sector to participate in the collection of spent coffee grounds (SCGs) and explore possible valorisation possibilities, including food, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals.

PROJECT PARTNERS

ADVISORY PARTNER | GERMANY

ECN - European Compost Network



The European Compost Network (ECN) is a European non-profit membership organisation promoting sustainable recycling practices in composting, anaerobic digestion and other biological treatment processes for organic resources. ECN represents more than **4500 composting and anaerobic digestion plants**, which treat about **48 million tonnes of bio-waste per year in Europe**.

ECN acts as an **advisory partner in the CORE project** and is supporting the partners in their journey producing good practices.

ECN's purpose is to work with practitioners, researchers, technicians and policy makers to deliver integrated organic waste recycling solutions that generate high quality products for the benefit of the environment and the users of the recycled products. ECN supports the policy objectives of the European Union through its activities and with its network of knowledgeable experts. ECN directly assists Member States in developing waste management plans and policies that drive them away from large scale landfilling and into the recycling of organic resources. ECN also serves as focal point for developing EU quality standards for bio-waste treatment and compost production; it is a network for the organic waste recycling sector in Europe, as well as the emerging bio-based economy.

ECN's vision is a Europe in which all organic resources are recycled and recovered in a sustainable way. From this vision, ECN's primary goal is to support the implementation of EU waste policies and thereby contributing to the development of a recycling society, to sustainable agriculture and energy recovery, to improve human health and to create overall added value within the European market. To achieve this, ECN believes that effective recycling in all Member States should be built on appropriate collection systems for organic waste to promote high quality products derived from biological treatment.

ECN supports this development through: implementation programmes for Member States; the development of European harmonised quality assurance systems for compost and digestate (**ECN-QAS**); and, guidelines for the monitoring of operational processes within compost and digestate facilities.

PROJECT ASPIRATIONS



„Across the EU, between 118-138 million tonnes of biowaste is generated annually.

An average of 37% of municipal solid waste is organic, making it a priority for the circular economy.“

THEMATIC SEMINARS

Central to the CORE-project is exchanging knowledge and experiences ('Good Practices') between partners on prevention of food waste, home composting, neighbourhood composting, industrial biowaste management including anaerobic digestion and composting. To this effect, every semester a Thematic Seminar with several study visits is organised. These thematic seminars provide partners with invaluable opportunities to learn from each other, enhancing their understanding and implementation of best practices. The seminars can include workshops and visits to composting and anaerobic digestion sites, allowing participants to gain hands-on experience and insights into various biowaste management techniques.



Reduction of organic waste in residual waste: example Province of Bolzano

Since 1993, South Tyrol has significantly reduced the share of organic waste in residual waste through its waste management plan and its regular updates.

04 Mar 2024 | By project CORE



The use of Master Composters to help implement Home Composting in Flanders

Master Composters are volunteers (supported by a municipal officer) that give personal / local advice on home composting management and the 'Biocycle at Home'.

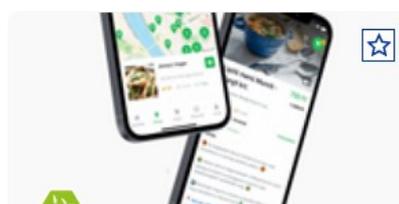
11 Aug 2023 | By project CORE



Vermicomposting

The good practice is focuses in centers that self-manage vegetal waste and cold manure. Also is an interesting tool to do environmental education in schools.

11 Jul 2024 | By project CORE



MUNCH App

MUNCH is a platform where restaurants and shops sell unsold but good quality food at a discount.

13 Feb 2024 | By project CORE



Food Waste Collection and Anaerobic Digestion System for Biogas and Biofertilizer

Selective collection of bio-waste in different municipalities of centre Sweden and its transportation to an anaerobic digestion facility for its treatment.

11 Jan 2024 | By project CORE

Check out our Good Practices on our website or here:



THEMATIC SEMINARS

CIUDAD REAL – SPAIN

Kick-off meeting | 17-19 April 2023

The kick-off meeting was organised by **RSUSA**, the Lead Partner, from 17-19 April 2023 in Ciudad Real. The Thematic Seminar focussed on **'Individual, Community and Open-windrow Composting'** and **'Industrial Composting and Anaerobic Digestion'**. 11 good practices were presented by the project partners and stakeholders.



During the 3-days seminar RSUSA organised several study visits demonstrating the two good practices presented by RSUSA on **'Community composting of Biowaste in Occupational Centre'** and by Composta en Red on **'Training of Master Composter'**.

Study visits

- Composting Areas in Cabañeros Natural Park nearby (El Robledo)
- Experience with soil mesofauna in the compost maturation process
- Ecomposting: Smart Composting Experience
- Centralised Composting Facilities in Almagro
- Visit to ADIN (Occupational Centre) Villanueva de los Infantes
- Visit to composting areas in urban organic gardens in Ciudad Real

Via the first stakeholder meeting on the 20.07.2023 RSUSA shared with its stakeholders the lessons learnt from the other partners in the Thematic Seminar in Ciudad Real.

RSUSA has also benefited from the interregional activities organised during semester 1. Specially inspiring for RSUSA has been the GP "Implementing a Home Composting scheme with the help of Master Composters", provided by P3 Vlaco during the Thematic Seminar in Ciudad Real.

The fact of recruiting and training volunteers as master composters for them to teach their own neighbours to compost at home, with a plain language without technicalities called RSUSA attention very much. These volunteers are, in the model shared by Vlaco, guided by environmental staff of the municipality and are retired people. The materials used by Vlaco to educate, raise awareness and communicate with the citizens were also very inspiring as well as their results in terms of percentage organic waste treated at home.

THEMATIC SEMINARS

BOLZANO – ITALY

In September 2023, the **Province of Bolzano** - South Tyrol hosted the 2nd Thematic Seminar (TS2) in Bolzano, Italy. The 3-day event (26-28 September 2023) was attended by 46 local and foreign partners and their stakeholders.

Nine good practices were shared by project partners on the topics **‘Prevention of Organic Waste in Rural Areas’** and **‘Regulation for Composting in Rural Areas’**

Throughout the three days, several visits were made to locations corresponding to the good practices defined by South Tyrol at the beginning of the CORE-project.

Study visits

- Five composting plants (Naz-Sciaves, Erdbau, Garden of Trauttmansdorff, Silandro, Egna)
- One anaerobic digestion plant (Lana)
- Recycling Center and Waste Transfer Station (Naz-Sciaves and Funes).

These visits provided partners and stakeholders with a comprehensive overview of biowaste management in South Tyrol. The visits were very inspirational, allowing participants to pose questions directly to managers and operators.

On the last day of the seminar, COOPERARI (CORE coordinator) and ECN (communication officer for CORE) discussed the next inputs and tasks expected from all partners, such as the timeline to finalize the Thematic Analyses, the exchange of signed copies of the Partnership Agreement, the status of the Partner Region Western Macedonia (Greece), which has been inactive so far, and suggestions for improving cooperation or activities in development:

- The meeting for semester 6 has no pre-allocated topic, allowing joint decisions as the project advances. Partners will bring proposed topics to the next TS in Flanders, including microplastics.
- Agreed: more time for indoor sessions (two 1.5-hour sessions), fewer Good Practices (1 per partner) in order to have more time for discussion.



THEMATIC SEMINARS

MECHELEN – BELGIUM

Vlaco organised and hosted the 3rd Thematic Seminar in Flanders (Mechelen) on 'Training of Master Composters and other volunteers' and on 'Engagement of Citizens and Organisations in Composting on Rural Areas'. The 3-day event (14-16 May 2024) was attended by a sizeable number (45!) of local and foreign partners and their stakeholders. After welcoming all participants and laying out the 3-day program, Vlaco introduced partner ECN in order to start moderating all the ensuing good practices that were to be presented. The first part of the day allowed **eight regional experiences** to be shared – one by every project partner.

Throughout the three days of the Thematic Seminar several visits were made - each location corresponding or having a direct reference to the good practices that Vlaco defined and described at the beginning of the CORE-project.

Study visits

- Three Composting plant (VERKO, DJ Compost, Compostwerf)
- Centres of expertise on home, neighbourhood, or farm composting ('t Compostjen, ILVO, Comité Jean Pain).

We were warmly welcomed everywhere, knowledge and experience were shared with great enthusiasm. A [detailed report](#) can be downloaded from CORE's website and is being drafted for Vlaco's magazine KringloopZINE (edition June2024).

On the last day of the 3rd CORE seminar COOPERARI (CORE coordinator) and ECN (communication officer for CORE) elaborated amongst others on the next inputs and tasks expected from all partners - e.g. increasing efforts in reaching target groups and overcoming current policy and practical barriers by applying the already learnt lessons. These 'local actions' for Vlaco will in part consist of creating tutorial videos in the second half of 2024. Finally on 16 May 2024 a glance was cast at the following thematic seminar (TS4) which will be held in September in Potsdam (Brandenburg) in Germany. The Thematic Seminar was concluded with a visit to the European Parliament (Hemicycle) in Brussels!



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The CORE consortium is led by

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Partners:

[LfU - State Office of Environment Brandenburg](#)

[VLACO](#)

[Świętokrzyskie Region - Marshal Office of Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship](#)

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