

Press release

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Visions for resource efficiency: insights from the R4R mid-term conference

International experts met on 15 May during the R4R project mid-term conference in Odense, Denmark, where they had the opportunity to learn more on waste monitoring and modelling, and to debate on the future resource efficiency policy. Besides presentations on European expertise and long-term aspirations, the conference focused on R4R tools, aimed at helping cities and regions to improve selective collection and recycling performances.

On 15 May, R4R partners shared the project's progress regarding identification of waste recycling good practices and the development of a monitoring tool on waste management with an audience made up of representatives from local and regional authorities, consultancies and universities.

A presentation from the European Topic Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production highlighted the progress made by European Member States regarding recycling, but also stressed that most of them will have to make extraordinary effort in order to achieve by 2020 the 50% recycling target, set by the Waste Framework Directive. Regions have indeed a big role to play here and it is vital to provide them with efficient tools, such as the ones foreseen by R4R, to increase their performance.

The Danish Environmental Protection Agency stressed the importance of avoiding "down cycling" and expressed the wish for a global reduction of incineration capacity in Denmark in favour of recycling installations. However, high recycling rate is not necessarily synonymous with high environmental performance, as demonstrated by the Technical University of Denmark: we should focus not necessarily on the input to a waste treatment facility or even the output from a recycling plant, but on the value of what is being substituted.

Later on the same day, a debate allowed experts to pinpoint the key practices needed to ensure a high level of recycling, showing that a mix of collection, economic and educational instruments is the key to success. The experts also shared long-term visions, including the implementation of decentralised solutions to reduce waste generation, reuse of products and increase in waste collection and recycling, in order to preserve material resources and close the product loop.

On 16 and 17 May, R4R partners kept on discussing the R4R online monitoring tool, the local instruments and external factors, as well as the data comparison related to selective collection of textile, wood and plastic waste.



Regions for Recycling (R4R) is a 3-year European project (2012-2014) aiming at improving its partners' recycling performances through consistent comparisons and an exchange of good practices. R4R involves 13 partners and is co-funded by the INTERREG IVC programme.

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