

Output Factsheet

Output title:

O.2.3 Transnational strategy regarding circularity in machine industry

Summary of the output (max. 2500 characters)

The development of a joint transnational strategy aims to boost circularity in the machine industry across the Danube Region. The strategy builds upon comprehensive analysis, stakeholders consultations and the practical guidance provided in the Handbook for Circular Machine Industry (D.2.3.2). O.2.3 comprises further D.2.3.1 Business model development for circularity in the machine industry and its core piece D.2.3.4 Drafting A Joint Plan to boost Circularity in machine industry.

It addresses common challenges and opportunities identified among participating countries, focusing on improving resource efficiency, extending product lifecycles, increasing reuse, remanufacturing and recycling of machines and components, and integrating circular economy principles into industrial value chains.

The strategy defines shared objectives, priority actions and coordinated policy and business measures to support the transition from linear to circular business models in the machine industry. It promotes harmonized approaches at transnational level, encouraging collaboration between industry actors, research institutions, clusters, public authorities and support organizations. Collaboration is the backbone of a successful circular economy. A harmonized regulatory framework is also crucial for the successful implementation of circular practices.

Key elements include improving regulatory, fostering innovation, strengthening skills and knowledge, supporting SMEs in adopting circular solutions, and market conditions for circular products and services. By providing a common strategic framework, the output 2.3 supports the alignment of regional and national initiatives, reduces fragmentation, and enhances synergies among Danube Region countries. The strategy is designed as a flexible and transferable document that can be adapted to different territorial contexts while maintaining a shared vision for circular transformation in the machine industry.

Contribution to the program and project objectives, output and result indicator, as well as to the targets set for the Priority Area concerned (max. 2000 characters)

The transnational strategy for circularity in the machine industry directly contributes to the Interreg Danube Program objective of strengthening innovation capacities and supporting the transition towards a circular economy in the Danube Region. It supports Plan-C project objectives by translating analytical findings and pilot experiences into a coordinated strategic framework that fosters long-term systemic change in the machine industry.

The output 2.3. contributes to relevant program output and result indicators, especially program output indicator 1.1.3 – *Strategies and action plans jointly developed* - by enhancing cooperation among organizations across borders, improving policy alignment, and increasing the capacity of SMEs and support institutions to implement circular economy practices. It addresses the Priority Area targets – *A more competitive and smarter Danube Region* - by promoting sustainable industrial development, efficient use of resources, reduced environmental impact and increased competitiveness of regional value chains.

The strategy's core is D.2.3.4 A Joint Plan to boost Circularity in machine industry. Its five pillars, Innovation & Technology & Capacity Building; Regulation & Policy & Infrastructure; Collaboration & Knowledge Transfer; Awareness & Societal & Education; Ecological design & Sustainable product development contribute to Priority Area 8 of EUSDR (Competitiveness of enterprises) by supporting regional transformation through innovation in the machine industry and knowledge transfer.

Through its transnational scope, the strategy strengthens governance structures and encourages joint actions, thereby improving the effectiveness of public and private investments in circular innovation. It also supports the uptake of circular solutions beyond pilot activities, ensuring that project results have a broader and more durable impact on the program area.

How can the output be used and by whom (target group), what is the benefit and the impact for these target groups and the target area / Danube Region? (max. 1500 characters)

The transnational strategy for circularity in the machine industry serves as a strategic guide for multiple target groups across the Danube Region. The output 2.3 can be used by policy makers at national and regional level, business support organizations, clusters, sectoral agencies and chambers, innovation agencies, research and education institutions, and companies, especially SMEs in the machine industry. It serves as a

strategic reference document for designing policies, support schemes, action plans and investment priorities related to circular economy implementation.

For companies, the strategy together with the Handbook for Circular Machine Industry provides guidance on adopting circular business models, improving competitiveness and accessing new markets.

For public authorities and business support organizations, it offers a coordinated framework to develop targeted measures, reduce policy fragmentation and strengthen cross-border cooperation.

For the Danube Region, the strategy contributes to a more resilient, resource-efficient and innovative machine industry, supporting sustainable growth and environmental objectives at transnational level.

How can the sustainability of the output be ensured and where and to whom is it going to be transferred? (max. 1500 characters)

The sustainability of the output 2.3 is ensured through its integration into existing policy frameworks, including RIS3 strategies, industrial strategies and support programs at regional and national level. On project level it's another basis for the Transnational Action Plan for integrating circularity in the entire plastics value chain in the Danube Region which will be elaborated in the final specific objective (SO3) of Plan-C project.

Project partners and associated organizations will promote the strategy beyond the project lifetime through their networks, clusters and institutional structures. The strategy is designed as a living document that can be updated and further developed in line with technological progress and policy developments.

Transfer of the output 2.3 takes place through dissemination activities, workshops, policy dialogues, final project conference and cooperation platforms within the Danube Region and beyond. It will be made available to public authorities, industry stakeholders, business support organizations and educational institutions, enabling replication and upscaling in other regions. This ensures long-term use and impact, contributing to sustained circular transformation in the machine industry.