

# D7. COLLECTION OF IDEAS GREECE



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## **DEBATE THE PROBLEMS MAPPING AND SOLUTIONS PROPOSALS**

Suggestions and insights from participants were documented during the discussion and through targeted electronic questionnaires distributed after the event. Participants expressed a newfound understanding and commitment to applying knowledge gained in their daily lives.

The primary objective of this section of the event was to understand citizens' perspectives on the need for targeted education and awareness programs, as well as to explore potential solutions for fostering a circular economy within the community.

The key themes that participants have pointed are the following:

### **Targeted Citizens Education**

Participants widely acknowledged the importance of targeted education for citizens. Recommendations included advertising on television and social media, informative broadcasts, hosting events, and conducting surveys in public spaces.

### **Youth Awareness**

Participants emphasized the need to integrate relevant practices into school curricula, develop interactive programs, and create educational games that simulate environmental concepts to raise awareness among children and young people.

### **Local Market Encouragement**

Suggestions for encouraging the local market to adopt circular economy principles included rewarding consumers with discounts for circular actions and implementing systems like bottle returns for financial incentives.

### **Best Practices**

Citizens highlighted successful practices from other countries, such as reduced municipal fees based on waste reduction, informative campaigns, and incentives for reuse, repair and recycling.

### **Accelerating Citizen Action on Climate Crisis**

Proposed initiatives to accelerate citizen awareness and action on climate change included systematic information, infrastructure development, municipal incentives, collaboration between neighboring municipalities, and joint actions by environmental and business sectors.

### **Addressing Waste Pollution**

Recommendations to combat waste pollution involved penalties for intentional negligence of circular economy policies and the implementation of both rewarding and punitive policies.

### **Scaling Circular Economy Model**

Responses included comprehensive citizen education, the use of AI for waste sorting, and the promotion of alternative products through labeling and awareness to facilitate the widespread implementation of the circular economy model.

### **Decision Making and Responsibility Allocation**

Recommendations emphasized participatory decision-making, incentives, and the involvement of citizens in decision processes at the municipal level.

### **Actions for Municipalities to Accelerate Collective Mindset Change**

Municipalities play a crucial role in fostering a shift towards a circular economy. Initial actions should focus on widespread awareness campaigns followed by investments in specialized waste collection vehicles and the establishment of designated recycling areas for different types of waste.

### **Citizens Contribution to the Goal of Less Plastic Waste**

Citizens can contribute significantly to this objective through their daily activities. Firstly, by minimizing the use of plastic in all aspects of their lives and ensuring strict segregation of waste in appropriate bins. Secondly, by reducing the purchase and use of plastic items as much as possible. Minimization of the demand on certain products (profitable for industry and harmful for environment/public health) by consumers and public buyers would contribute to the market regulation and to a shift to more circular and eco-friendly goods.

### **Citizen Advocacy for Legislation and Policies**

Citizens hold the power to influence the reduction of plastic production by pressuring for the implementation of laws and policies. This can be achieved through active engagement in advocating for stricter regulations on plastic production by industries. Factors hindering this include lack of information, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient incentives.

### **Challenges in Transition to Sustainability**

Factors impeding the transition towards sustainability include a lack of awareness and infrastructure, as well as the absence of adequate financial incentives. Overcoming these challenges necessitates the implementation of a comprehensive and sustainable circular economy model. This involves educating citizens, piloting initiatives, constant evaluation, and providing a mix of incentives and disincentives.

### **Call for Continuous Awareness**

Both citizens and experts conveyed a unanimous opinion on the necessity of continuous efforts to raise awareness about the climate crisis, the shift towards a circular production model, and sustainable consumption at national and city levels. The need for repetitive and ongoing initiatives to embed these principles into daily practices was underscored.

The event helped to raise awareness, encourage a positive attitude and introduce participants to the potential of the WE-DEMOCRACY project. Overall, the recommendations highlight the importance of ongoing education collaboration and citizens engagement in creating a successful circular economy.