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NEWSLETTER: The INNOMED-UP Project NEWS, 2021

promoting UPcycling in
circular economy through
INNOvation and education
for creative industries in
MEDiterranean cities



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NEWSLETTER:
**The INNOMED-UP Project NEWS,
2021**



Dear readers of INNOMED-UP Newsletter,

I am proud to present you our 3rd Newsletter. Our INNOMED-UP Project is going through the second year of work and collaboration. We could say that if the first year was dedicated to the data collection, methodological guidelines, the review of existing policies and the state of the art on Circular Economy and Cultural & Creative Industries, the second year which is already running, deals with the creation of a wealth of knowledge, practices and experiences.

We have already carried out successful events around Mediterranean and now, we find ourselves at the delighted but also responsible position to collect all the raw material, experiences and information and to transform these into useful future capitalized knowledge. We hope and we aim at contributing to shift local urban economies towards a circular production and consumption paradigm, by leveraging the know-how and creativity of Creative & Cultural Industries that are present in the historical centers of the Mediterranean Cities.

During the period that passed, the 1st INNOMED-UP Conference and the 3rd Steering Committee Meeting were held remotely. Specifically, the 1st INNOMED-UP Conference was held on Monday, February 15th, 2021 via teleconference, jointly organized by the Municipality of Prato (Italy) and the Lead Beneficiary of the INNOMED-UP Project National Technical University of Athens (Greece). All INNOMED-UP participants and stakeholders have contributed to achieving a fruitful dialogue in a cooperative manner. Within the framework of INNOMED-UP Project implementation, both the structure and content of the Conference was properly adapted, serving its multiple purpose to present the achievements of the INNOMED-UP Project and the research findings, aiming to integrate the principles of the

Circular Economy into Cultural & Creative Small-Medium Enterprises productive schemes.

Furthermore, the 3rd Steering Committee meeting of the INNOMED-UP Project was held on Monday 12th of April 2021. Project Partners discussed various topics, highlighting success stories and building the way forward. Collecting information on Circular Economy industry at the INNOMED-UP Mediterranean cities and finding linkages between Cultural & Creative Small-Medium Enterprises and the Circular Economy were the basic outcomes of the meeting.

The following period, we set up the engines of the Cultural & Creative Small-Medium Enterprises' clustering roadmaps for each INNOMED-UP city, synthesized with the smart tools, namely Smart Bicycle, Central Information System, Smart Garbage Bin and Open source repository for circular designs & eco-design toolkits in order to boost the future INNOMED-UP activities.

I wish you good browsing on our new newsletter and stay tuned for all that is following by our official website (<http://www.enicbcmmed.eu/projects/innomed-up>) and social media (INNOMED-UP Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube).

Kind Regards,

Sofia Avgerinou Kolonias
INNOMED-UP Project Coordinator
Emeritus Professor, Department of Urban and Regional Planning
School of Architectural Engineering
National Technical University of Athens (N.T.U.A.)



Work in Progress, Tunis, Tunisia



Repair Workshop, Palermo, IT

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«Upcycle & make your bag in Athens»

A Closer Look at INNOMED-UP Partners Efforts

SMEs Clustering Capacity Enhancement through Roadmaps & Smart Tools

The INNOMED-UP Beneficiary's Research Team (National Technical University of Athens, Greece), during the 3rd INNOMED-UP Steering Committee Meeting, presented the main points of work implemented within the 3rd Semester of INNOMED-UP Project's implementation period. Specifically, the Strategy design for Specialization of the INNOMED-UP Holistic Approach at a local level has been completed. All partners set the basis for their local strategies bearing in mind the priority of the Cross - border impact at Mediterranean level. The Strategy Design covers the following aspects per each city:

- the vision to promote the core concept of the project,
- the general and specific goals according to the research findings,
- measurable targets in order to be able to evaluate the impact of the project
- critical steps in order to achieve goals and targets and come a step closer to the vision.

Then, the survey results (one survey per city - seven in total), were summarized in the following four points:

- Most CCI SMEs collaborate with other SMEs in various stages of their work and expressed their interest in enhancing these collaborations, both horizontally and vertically.

- Many confirmed that they don't manage in any way their waste and they are not familiar with circular practices, but they showed great interest in exploring this potential.

- The location near city centers has been evaluated as important as regards access to networks of supply and distribution, as well access to services. The touristic character of city centers is also considered positive, but it may also pose threats.

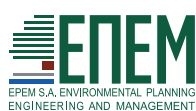
- Existing networks should be enhanced and strengthened to the direction of promoting circular models of collaboration.

Survey data was collected through online, telecommunications and less face to face meetings due to the continuous restrictions as a result of COVID. The SMEs involved in the survey are 30 at least in each city and will be the pool to draw from the future beneficiaries of the program.

Regarding CCI SMEs' clustering roadmaps for each city, the results will be synthesized with the smart tools, namely Smart Bicycle, Central Information System, Smart Garbage Bin and Open source repository for circular designs & eco-design toolkits.



«Rescue, Transform, Donate» Palermo, IT



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REGIONE AUTONOMA DE SARDIGNA
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA



NATIONAL TECHNICAL
UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS

Research findings per each INNOMED-UP city

Athens Circles of Creativity

by ben NTUA, Athens, Greece

INNOMED-Up survey in Athens was conducted during March 2021 and was based on an on-line google-forms questionnaire in Greek. This was distributed to 40 SMEs, which were chosen from the database of potential beneficiaries based on the mapping conducted in previous steps. Following communication with all the SMEs the form was completed either online, through the telephone or with one-to-one meetings. The SMEs that participated were 30 in total and were organized in 3 categories, namely 18 Crafts, 10 Design and 2 Maker-spaces. The main research results are summarized in the following points:

- The SMEs are small or very small and seem to be viable due to their small size, unique products, flexibility and adaptability
- Their establishment in the historical centre of Athens has a positive impact on their business due to its centrality, accessibility, increasing visibility, low installation costs and possibility of developing partnerships
- Several networks are being developed with higher impact – such as production and supply networks, medium impact – such as distribution and promotion and social networks and low impact – such as access to innovation and technology networks.
- Vertical collaborations are very common within the

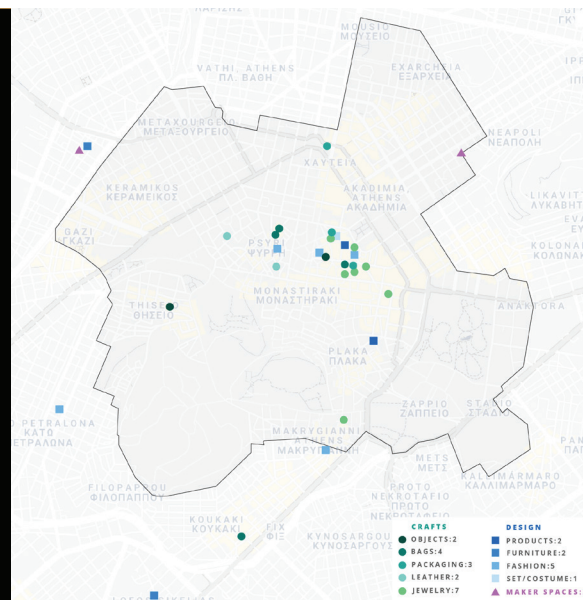
city centre, whereas horizontal collaborations are less common

- The raw materials needed for their business can be found as waste materials of other businesses
- There is willingness to embrace circularity but at the same time there is lack of tools, know-how and institutional support

The first outcomes, are aligned with the Athens' Strategic Design at local level under the motto 'Athens Circles of Creativity'. The strategy aims at the maintenance, strengthening, support and networking of CCI SMEs in the historic centre of Athens. Moreover, it aims at the embeddedness of circular practices in CCI SMEs in order to produce new innovative products and draw new and external knowledge, but also the training on the use of new technologies and smart tools to accelerate innovation and boost their competitiveness.

The expected results are:

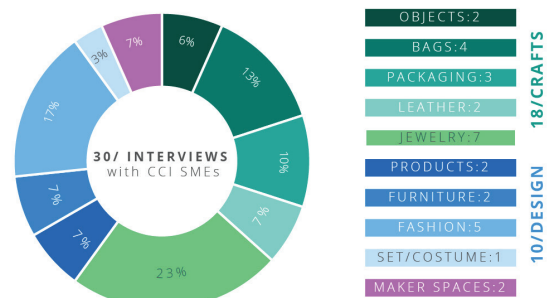
- A new perception of materials
- A shift towards innovation and implementation of new technologies;
- Development of clusters and networks;
- Implementation of good practices;
- Creation of new job opportunities and increase of competitiveness.



SME at Prato, IT



SME at Prato, IT



Map & diagram of SMEs interviewed at the city center of Athens, GR, NTUA

Prato Circular City - Transitioning towards the Circular Economy

by pp2 Municipality of Prato, Italy

30 SMEs replied to the survey which was delivered through an online questionnaire addressing firms involved in the INNOMED-UP SWOT PEST workshop and other sustainability projects of the Municipality of Prato.

The main outcomes of the survey are:

- most firms are historical enterprise established before the 2008-2007 crisis;
- the main advantage of their location are the synergies and networking with other firms and suppliers; main disadvantages are the poor visibility and high operating costs;
- most enterprise enjoy access to technology, information and knowledge, finance, clients and promotion (in this order)

Regarding Value Chains and Circularity:

- most firms work with other SMEs to manage the

productions phases: product development, purchase of raw material, yarn production, warehousing, promotion, distribution and selling

- some firms do research and testing to develop new products, in collaboration with customers, too, by developing new processes or specialized machines

- most firms would like to be supported to expand their networks in order to:

- 1) open to new markets and business opportunities
- 2) discover new market opportunities
- 3) discover new suppliers of raw materials
- 4) maintain the production levels throughout the year

- most understand the value of technology & digitalization at all production stages

- the most used materials are: Wool, Cotton, Polyester, Linen, Nylon or Acrylic
- waste like Textile waste, Plastic, Paper / cardboard,

Wood, Metal is collected directly from the firms by special waste management companies

- circular economy principles could be embraced mainly through the following incentives (in this priority order):

- 1) Financial support
- 2) Networking with experienced firms
- 3) Promotion of CE products
- 4) Innovative equipment

- and by overcoming the following obstacles:

- 1) Lack of knowledge/ expertise
- 2) Lack of institutional support
- 3) Operational difficulties during the transition
- 4) Lack of interest for CE products from the consumers' side

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SME at Palermo, IT



SME at Palermo, IT

Circular Economy equals Social Engagement

by pp3 CRESM, Palermo, Italy

26 SMEs based in Palermo and operating in the area responded to the survey which was carried out with an online questionnaire and with meetings held at the info point of the INNOMED-UP project in Palermo, at the Nuova Officine Zisa center of CRESM.

In Palermo, most of the creative SMEs are concentrated in the historic center area. There are very few activities characterized by a truly commercial approach and which have a number of employees higher than the simple family management. Most of these new artisans are organized in the legal form of non-profit associations. There is a

lot of attention to environmental sustainability, to the reuse of waste materials of all kinds, but they cannot be considered fully organized and participating in the cycle of the Circular Economy.

Most of the managers of artisans' associations are men, with an average age of 45-55 and with a high level of education. The most popular degree is the one in Architecture and Design, but an apprenticeship in the company is frequent. A good percentage of companies experiment with new eco-sustainable materials.

Strategy design at local level

Repurposing of municipal spaces/buildings for circular economy activation

Activating 'Ecole de la Proprete' as a hub for circular economy research with support of Ministry of higher education & research

Design administrative process to facilitate municipal partnerships with start-ups and micro-businesses in circular economy

**Towards a :
Zero Waste Medina**

Study circular economy paths, to facilitate cluster activities

Strategy Design, Tunis, Tunisia

Towards a Zero Waste Medina

by pp4 Municipality of Tunis, Tunisia

INNOMED-Up research in Tunis was conducted via mixed process to collect information from a wide range of potential collaborators in making Medina's urban circular economy cluster a success. The survey was conducted through one-to-one meetings with artisans at their workshops; meetings with young start-ups in environment sector; and finally, meetings with private sector businesses, to gather their views of circular economy sector growth opportunities.

Outcomes, were useful to draft the strategic design at local level; which will focus on 3 main objectives to reach our INNOMED-Up motto 'Towards a Zero Waste Medina'. The objectives are:

- Revival of municipal spaces for circular economy activities
- Activating 'Ecole de la Proprete' as a hub for circular economy research with support of Ministry

of higher education & research

- Partnership agreements between municipality and start-ups to create CE clusters

The main identified challenges facing SME's in CE could be summarized in 5 main points:

- ② Nonexistence of implementable legislation and the public administrative process that is not SME friendly.
- ② CE entrepreneurs find themselves having to make double the effort to both market their upcycling products but also advocate for importance of circular economy.
- ② Often upcycling prototypes are costly, and require hard to find financing.
- ② Access to technology is also costly and skilled workers are hard to find
- ② Challenges are also faced in finding a sustainable

upcycling business modelling

Many ideas came out of the survey, in many fields that the municipality of Tunis, is not investigating thanks to INNOMED-Up. Those include waste sorting, municipal composting, collection routes and transportation, spaces to allow for testing, prototyping as well as advocacy for circular economy. Municipality of Tunis is now analysing most cost effective, as well as implementation requirements in terms of administrative process, feasibility and market acceptance, but also transport solutions that are most efficient for Medina's reality.

Sustaining History for Sustainable Future

by pp5 Birzeit University, Hebron, Nablus, Palestine

PP5 presented Research Methodology, where BZU team used the questionnaire provided by NTUA. Data had been collected from relevant stakeholders and 37 SMEs in total and key informants like CoC and Municipalities. Researchers were able to conduct face to face interviews with SMEs owners before lockdowns

PP5 presented the Strategy Design at Local Level, the motto is Sustaining history for sustainable future and the vision is Creative and cultural industries are reusing existing resources and bringing cultural industries to our daily life's needs

Efforts to achieve some major Targets of the Strategy have been covered like MOUs with CoC and other startups associations.

Basic Info of Survey

Nablus:

- No. of SMEs = %30) 20 male - %70 female)

- Years of establishment: 2019-1984
- %80 of SMEs are not classified as a family tradition work.

- %75 don't have employees.

- %80 are Private entities.

- Main Activities: Arab mattress, Fashion design, Pottery and clay, Educational tools, Musical instruments, Recycling of batteries, Embroidery and epoxy, Fabric recycling, Soap art, Decoupage, Glass art, Natural firewood alternative, Tools for deaf students, School theater supplies, Antique furniture and wooden carvings

Hebron:

- No of SMEs = %35) 17 male - %65 female)
- Year of establishment: 2019-2000
- All SMEs are not classified as a family tradition work.
- Only %5 have employees.
- %95 are private entities.
- Activity: %12 fashion, %18 accessories, %24 in stones, %18 dolls, %28 woods

- Educational level: %41 owns BSc. Degree, %30 secondary school, %29 vocational schools.

Location and Networking – Survey results

Nablus:

- Geographical location of SMEs: %75 from the city of Nablus – others are from the villages of Nablus

- %55 are homebased

- %70 property - %30 rent.

- About half of SMEs have positive impact of the current location on the work

- %70 Participate in other institutional initiatives

- About half of SMEs have cooperation between SMEs from different sectors at the stage of production, and %35 in the procurement of raw materials and the sale of finished products stages

- %100 aspire to have such networks and need support.

Hebron:

- Geographical location of SMEs: %28 are located in Old City which is targeted by development and solidarity projects of different organizations and touristic activities,

all others are distributed in radius of 3-1 km from the center.

- Location of work: %52 are homebased - %48 work in a workshop/factory/store or office.

- Cooperation between SMEs from different sectors at the stage of production: %11 there is collaboration with another SMEs - %89 there is no collaboration.

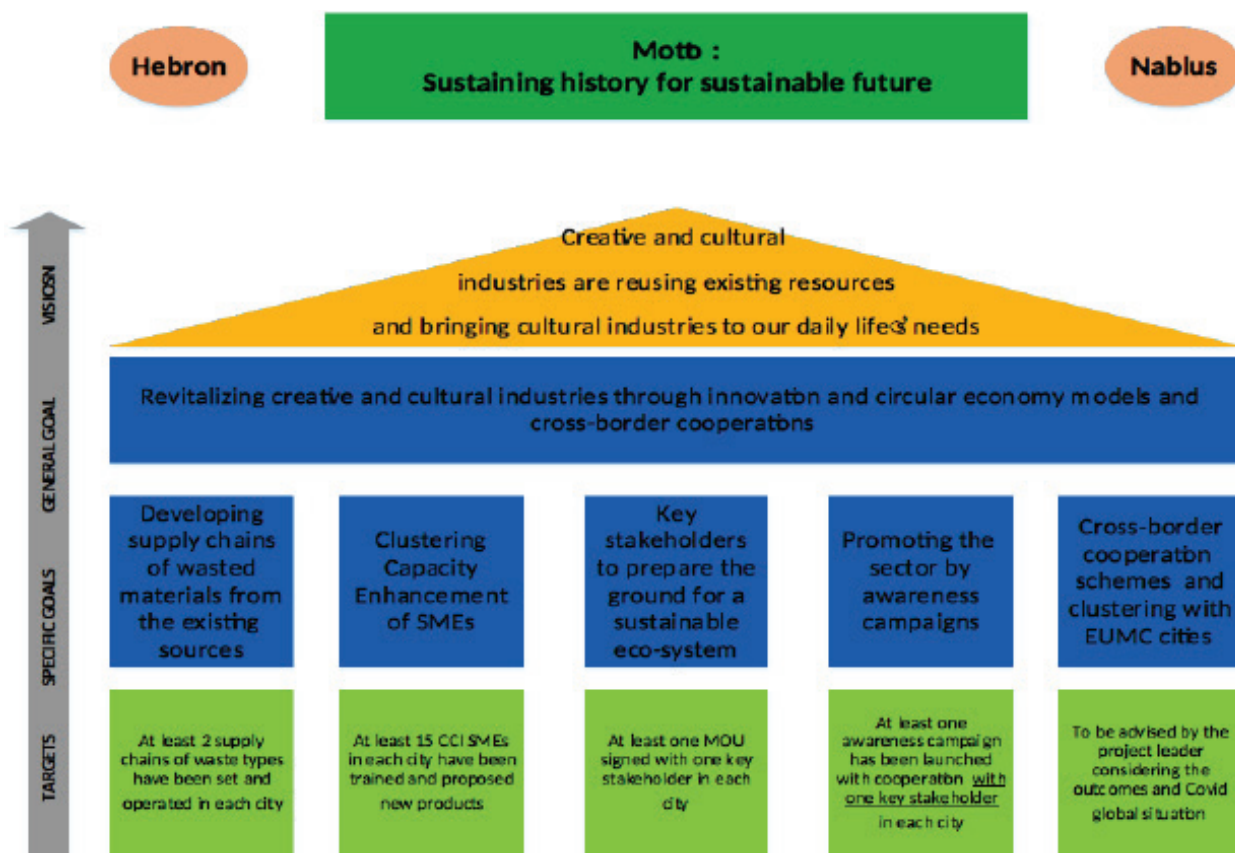
Value Chains and Circularity – Survey results

Nablus:

Value chains need to be strengthened and supported in order to create connection networks and promote visibility and accessibility. Most participating SMEs apply principles of circular economy and recycling at different stages of production, in different levels depending on the nature of work, availability of waste raw materials and technical skills. However, there is a clear gap between value of recycling practices perceived by customers and manufacturers.

Hebron:

The main waste inputs are being purchased locally like stones, ceramics, woods and papers, other "New" input materials are imported, most of them are available but some brands are usually missing and need special orders. Most SMEs didn't acquire knowledge and skills in CE concepts and practices. Over %80 confirmed that lack of technical skills in CE are of main obstacles in this field.



Strategy Design, BZU Palestine

Repair - Reuse for as long as possible

by pp6 FEPC, Irbid, Jordan

The discussion on circular economies adoption and strengthen in Jordan is one of the topics being discussed at the top levels. Few initiatives aiming at promoting circular economy approach had been planned and conducted by some NGOs and entrepreneurs aiming to build the concept of a circular economy more practical and tangible for the population as a whole. However, up to date entrepreneurs in this sector are fighting in the niches due to various challenges at institutional, technical and financial based levels.

Weak support from the relevant Institutions such as universities exists to aid into building a concrete knowledge on circular economy, and how it can be integrated effectively in Jordan's sectors. In addition, vision toward financing circular economy initiatives is still missing at the government level. On the other hand, the lack of knowledge about the circular economy

framework and benefits of the circular economy has been identified as one of the barriers to the implementation of circular economy practices among SMEs, besides to the monopoly of the current linear design of products and the lack of infrastructure and supporting secondary raw material market among others barriers of circular economy business model implementation.

In light of the barriers that the circular economy approach is facing and the enablers factors of the implementation of circular economy business models in Jordan, cooperation of different stakeholders to face the upcoming challenges of the transformation from linear to circular economy including the transition phase is necessary and considered essential for better understanding of the concept and improving management strategies and plans of its inclusion.



**Central
Information
System with the
help of open
source designs**



**Smart bicycle
will be
reproduced in
12copies!
(2/cluster)**



**The smart
Garbage bin will
be reproduced
in 60 copies
(10/cluster).**

Future Actions, Municipality of Tunis, Tunisia

Future Actions

Municipality of Tunis is the coordinator of WP5, titled 'Pilot Integration Action'. WP5 pilot clusters will be a result of WP4 city specific field survey roadmap. The success and sustainability of WP5 outcome, will require the involvement of local community, and engagement of stakeholders.

Each local pilot cluster, will have a geographical focus, materials will be collected through smart bins, distributed at households or workshops that will be part of the cluster; and delivered to local SMEs according to their demands by the bicycles. CCI SMEs will use collected material to create innovative products through upcycling. Smart Tools will be developed for use during this pilot activity, and this will include a Central Information System with the help of open-source designs; smart bicycles, and smart garbage bins. Pilot integration action methodology guidelines will be developed by the Municipality of Tunis. Once the cluster is launched, participating CCI SMEs will

be encouraged to submit a business proposal to receive funding for the production of innovative products or design of innovative services. Some SMEs will also be paired for cross-border collaboration.

WP5 also includes important advocacy events, such as 'Pilot Reuse Open Market' which will take place in both Tunis and Prato, where local communities bring material or objects from their households to be reused by CCI SMEs, and SMEs will present their products to gain visibility. Birzeit University will organize a 2-day workshop on the role of CCIs in the revitalization of Med-Urban Centres & promotion of CE in Hebron & Nablus. Future Pioneers and CRESM will organize a 2-day workshop for Civil society to foster involvement of women, youth and marginalized groups in CE. NTUA will organize a 2 day open workshop, for students, for the role of CCIs in the revitalization of Med Urban Centres and promotion of CE in local scale in Athens.