

## Innovation and creativity central to circular economy

Written by Julie Levy-Abegnoli on 28 January 2016 in Opinion  
Opinion

Despite many MEPs voicing their disappointment at the Commission's circular economy package, it does contain some positive elements, say Sirpa Pietikäinen and Davor Škrlec.



The European Commission caused quite a commotion among MEPs in December 2014, when it dropped circular economy proposals from its 2015 work programme.

At the time, team Juncker explained that the original proposals - penned by the previous Commission led by José Manuel Barroso - did not match their 'better regulation' agenda and promised to come forward with more ambitious plans in the following months.

Commission First Vice-President Frans Timmermans unveiled these plans last December, telling Parliament he was, "extremely proud" of the proposals, but unfortunately, MEPs were somewhat disappointed. However, some did manage to pick out a few positive aspects from the package.

---

## RELATED CONTENT

- [Pieter Noorlander: Circular economy requires systematic change](#) [1]
  - [Going full circle: The European Commission's Fantastic Four talk circular economy](#) [2]
  - [Monique Goyens: Circular economy: EU Commission must encourage sustainable design](#) [3]
  - [Magda Stoczkiewicz: Circular economy package lacks long-term vision](#) [4]
  - [Simona Bonafè: Circular economy requires new industrial model](#) [5]
- 

Sirpa Pietikäinen, who authored Parliament's report on, 'Resource efficiency: moving towards a circular economy', says, "What is definitely good in the proposal is the fact that more attention is now paid to financing circular innovations."

However, "All in all the package is very waste-concentrated when the focus should be on the whole product cycle from design onward. This is why a lot depends on how we can use the tools offered to us by the eco-design directive, which is a centre piece of legislation in this respect."

Another issue that has angered MEPs from all parties is the lack of specific targets. Pietikäinen explains that, "The European Parliament asked for a clear 30 per cent resource-efficiency target by 2030."

"The problem with the lack of a clear target, or setting targets too low is that we risk locking ourselves in misguided and suboptimal investments and end up losing a lot of money."

The EPP deputy is unsure the proposals will be enough to help Europe properly take on the enormous challenge of transitioning to a circular economy, given that, "every single year we consume 1.5 planets' worth of resources, and this trend is rather increasing than decreasing."

"When we inch closer to hitting the boundaries of our planet, this will inevitably affect the availability and the price of many critical resources. Europe is more dependent on imported resources than any of our competitors. This is why creating a circular economy here in Europe is of utmost importance."

Davor Škrlec, who is Parliament's Greens/EFA group shadow rapporteur on the upcoming waste management dossier, is more optimistic about the Commission's future plans, enthusing that, "for the first time, the EU defines common goals at EU level according to globally accepted UN sustainable development goals. That approach sends a clear message to the world that Europe is ready to transform its economy into a sustainable, low-carbon and resource-efficient economy."

The Croatian national underlines that, "Waste prevention, both in production and consumption, is important, and reuse of materials or products are some of the major pillars. Recycling is important but it is not purposed for itself. Therefore using Horizon 2020 wisely will benefit the development of new and non-toxic materials, and will make recycling more energy and resource-efficient."

For the MEP, it's important that we give ourselves the means to succeed in the transition to a circular economy, and clearly new, innovative, business models have a large role to play in this respect.

Škrlec says, "We must provide adequate training to enable entrepreneurs and SMEs to develop new business models and make their business 'greener'. A major driver of the transition to a circular economy is the public sector. Therefore, the key to member states' success in this will be to integrate

the leading circular economy principles in existing green public procurement."

An essential step to a more sustainable economy is changing how we produce and consume goods. Škrlec tells this magazine, "I recently heard someone talking about the need to educate, 'the customers of the future'. This is a very well-defined message. We must invest in changing our citizens' behaviour and that of society."

## About the author

Julie Levy-Abegnoli is a journalist for the Parliament Magazine

## Tags

[Environment](#) [6]

[European Commission](#) [7]

[Research and Innovation](#) [8]

## Categories

[Business and industry](#) [9]

[Environment](#) [10]

[Science, technology and research](#) [11]



Parliament Magazine is a Dods Group plc title

---

## Site Sections

- [Home](#)
- [Content](#)
- [Policy](#)
- [Magazines](#)
- [PM+](#)
- [Thought Leader](#)
- [EU Elections 2019](#)
- [Editorial Calendar](#)
- [Policy Events](#)
- [Event Coverage](#)
- [MEP Awards 2019](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

## Services

[Dods PeopleDods](#)

[MonitoringDods](#)

[ResearchDods](#)

[EventsDods](#)

[Training](#)

## **Media & publishing titles**

[Politics Home](#)  
[The House](#)  
[The Parliament](#)  
[Magazine](#)  
[Holyrood](#)  
[Total Politics](#)  
[Public Affairs](#)  
[News](#)  
[Civil Service](#)  
[World](#)  
[Public](#)  
[Technology](#)  
[Training](#)  
[Journal](#)  
[Dods](#)  
[Parliamentary](#)  
[Companion](#)  
[Vacher's](#)  
[Quarterly](#)  
[The European Union and](#)  
[Public Affairs](#)  
[Directory](#)

## **Dods events**

[Westminster](#)  
[Briefing](#)  
[Digital Health & Care](#)  
[Scotland](#)  
[MEP Awards](#)  
[The Skills Summit](#)  
[Scottish Public Service](#)  
[Awards](#)  
[Public Sector Procurement](#)  
[Summit](#)  
[Public Sector](#)  
[ICT Summit](#)  
[Cyber Security Summit](#)  
[Cyber Security 2017](#)  
[Training](#)  
[Journal Awards](#)

## **Partnership events**

[The Health and Care Innovation Expo](#)  
[Civil Service Live](#)  
[Civil Service Awards](#)  
[Chief Nursing Officer for England's](#)  
[Summit](#)  
[Women into](#)

[LeadershipThe](#)  
[Youth Justice](#)  
[ConventionSocitm](#)  
[Spring](#)  
[ConferenceNHSCC](#)  
[Annual Members'](#)  
[EventDods at Party](#)  
[Conference](#)

---

[Privacy Policy](#)[Terms & Conditions](#)[Advertising](#)[Sponsorship](#) [Subscriptions](#)

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/innovation-and-creativity-central-circular-economy>

#### **Links**

- [1] [https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/partner\\_article/gispen/circular-economy-requires-systematic-change](https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/partner_article/gispen/circular-economy-requires-systematic-change)
- [2] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/going-full-circle-fantastic-four-talk-circular-economy>
- [3] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/circular-economy-eu-commission-must-encourage-sustainable-design>
- [4] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/circular-economy-package-lacks-long-term-vision>
- [5] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/opinion/circular-economy-requires-new-industrial-model>
- [6] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/environment>
- [7] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/european-commission>
- [8] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/research-and-innovation>
- [9] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/business-and-industry>
- [10] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/environment>
- [11] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/science-technology-and-research>