

Circular Slovakia and Holland Circular Hotspot join forces

On February 27th Circular Slovakia and Holland Circular Hotspot joined forces and officially declared their cooperation on accelerating transition to a circular economy. Denisa Rášová, coordinator of the Circular Slovakia Platform and Freek van Eijk, director of Holland Circular Hotspot, signed an official statement on future collaboration. On the same day, Circular Slovakia brought together public, private and third sectors to accelerate the transition towards a greener and circular Slovakia. Holland Circular Hotspot was invited to take part in the seminar where dialogue, new partnerships and exchanges of experience were encouraged.



by:

Denisa Rášová,
Coordinator of Circular Slovakia platform



Denisa Rášová and Freek van Eijk shaking hands on future collaboration between Slovakia and the Netherlands

Cross-border cooperation by joining forces

The two platforms will share knowledge, tools and good practices, facilitate connecting companies in both countries, coordinate organization of events and promote international cooperation in the circular economy.

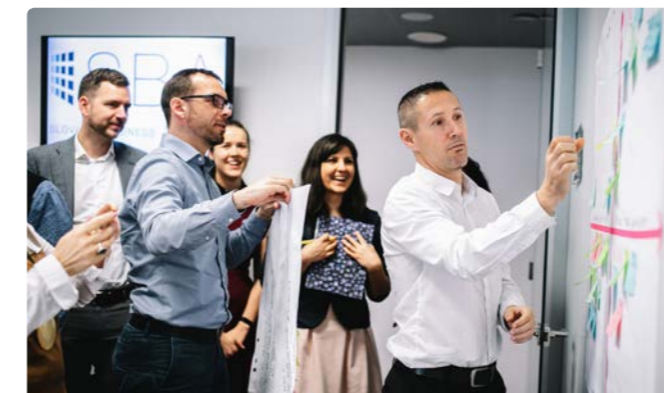
“The circular economy is not about copyright, but about the right to copy. By sharing best practices, insight, tools and contacts between Holland Circular Hotspot and Circular Slovakia, we can both learn, get to the action level fast, keep resources in the loop much longer and keep our countries liveable and economically vibrant. It is about the economy, and creating jobs with a tremendous sustainable spin-off”, said Holland Circular Hotspot Director Freek van Eijk.

The exchange of experience between Slovakia and the Netherlands has been successfully operating for several years in the recycling of rigid plastics, such as garden furniture or crates. “With our knowledge about recycling opportunities, we can support Slovak companies with their steps to a circular economy. There are already two companies in Slovakia who are working with the knowledge of Van Werven to sort post-consumer hard plastics, which are recycled at the Van Werven plant in Gromadka Poland. Secondary raw materials are used in EU industry to make new products.”, said Ton van der Giessen, director of the family recycling company, Van Werven Plastic Recycling.

Building the circular platform

The seminar provided space for 40 company representatives and other major actors in the circular economy. They expressed their expectations and needs and demonstrated what they can offer by helping the transition to a greener and circular Slovakia. Our chamber members were also actively involved – ING, Heineken, Business Lease and Van den Bergen.

According to Petra Csefalvayova from the Institute of Circular Economy, positive change has occurred in Slovakia over the last four years: “You won’t find a segment that at some point did not look for solutions in the circular economy. Companies are also considering competitiveness with regard to a sustainable



Seminar participants brainstorming ideas on Circular Slovakia activities

image and strategy. According to Csefalvayová, in Slovakia it is still necessary to create a legislative environment conducive to circular solutions. Specific steps such as eco-modulation, and green public procurement are becoming a reality in Slovakia and thus a tool of change and support.”

Key takeaways from the design thinking workshop

Seminar participants came with a lot of ideas on how the circular platform in Slovakia should look. Most ideas were connected with awareness-raising, information sharing, such as offering media space for companies active in the circular economy, awarding circular business models and organizing field trips to front running companies.



The final output from design thinking workshop

In terms of education, along with organizing seminars, companies need to pay special attention to consulting, to support the change from a linear to a sustainable circular model. As one of the participants remarked, long-term consultation for business representatives with no experience on circularity would be a huge support.

Additionally, an added value of the platform would be to provide space for networking and partner search for the circular project. Enabling dialogue with relevant ministries in order to become a credible partner for policymakers and providing financial incentives and tax reliefs for boosting the circular environment in Slovakia were also among the top priorities.

All the ideas are now being transformed into a platform business model and Circular Slovakia will undertake concrete actions to boost public-private partnerships fostering circular transition in Slovakia.

The seminar was financially supported by ING.