



Community Waste Management / Recycling Programmes

The European Union (EU-27) currently recycles roughly 48% of municipal waste each year, leaving approximately 113 million metric tonnes of residual municipal waste (neither recycled nor reused) annually. Under the European Commission's Waste Framework Directive, residual municipal waste needs to be reduced by 50% by 2030 to roughly 56.5 million metric tonnes. However, the EU is currently not on track to reach this target without reducing total municipal waste.

Waste management in Europe aims at promoting waste treatment options in line with the waste hierarchy, notably favouring preparation for re-use and recycling over disposal operations such as landfilling.

These case studies demonstrate how together communities can do it correctly and how each and every one of these projects is making an impact

1. MISSÃO CASCAS SOLIDÁRIAS (MCS)
2. GREEN SOAP
3. NoWaste - GUIDE TO SEPARATE COLLECTION OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE
4. THE USELESS PROJECT
5. BALLYLEAGUE RENEWAL'S COMMUNITY COMPOSTING INITIATIVE





MISSÃO CASCAS SOLIDÁRIAS (MCS)

CATEGORY

Community waste management/recycling programmes

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Portugal, District of Évora, 12 municipalities of the district

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Food waste is increasingly being talked about. On average, in Portugal, each citizen wastes 183 kilos of food per year. The Portuguese values are 10 kilos above the European average, which accounts for a waste of 173 kilos of food, per inhabitant, per year.

This company aims to change this and make a difference environmentally and socially by recycling leftover fruit and vegetables through composting, in an urban environment, and by providing social support

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



MISSÃO CASCAS SOLIDÁRIAS (MCS) or the “Mission Solidary Peels” is an active and environmental citizenship initiative developed by the municipal waste company Gesamb. The project, a pioneer in the region, has the primary objective of encouraging local populations and organisations to adopt recycling habits of the organic waste they produce (fruit peels, vegetables, stalks and leaves) while contributing to help those who need it most.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Since last year, in Alentejo, any citizen, company or organisation can support children and adults with disabilities simply by recycling their fruit and vegetable peelings - less waste, more social support.

The amount of organic waste that citizens separate and deposit in the domestic and community equipment distributed and installed in the district of Évora represents a value, that will later be converted into monetary support for Private Social Solidarity Institutions, whose work is focused on the provision of care to people with disabilities.



MCS managed to deliver more than 300 household composters in the last quarter of 2021 and there is still a list of citizens and companies waiting for their turn. This year, the aim is to provide community composters. These are, to a certain extent, equivalent to the “ecopoints” on the street. The difference is that instead of packages, people deposit organic waste.

Currently, in this pilot phase, there are a total of 28 community composters spread in the more populated areas of 12 municipalities of the district of Évora.

By joining the community composting, people are taking trucks off the road (waste collection), valuing a resource that would otherwise be wasted, and above all, actively participating in restoring the environmental balance of their region.

Sharing & Learning

Ms. Gilda Matos, senior official of GESAMB stated:

“We found that since MCS started, and after all the effort of the door-to-door, street-to-street, house-to-house campaign by the 12 municipalities covered by the GESAMB service, we have had a record number of online requests for home composters. There are 167 eligible people and 5 institutions waiting for their turn. And every day we receive more requests”.

Transferability of the Practice

This is a pioneering solution in the region, and probably also in the country, and that can dictate the success of Community Composting at a national level. It is preparing the ground for municipalities to perpetuate these procedures and good practices in their communities, through their

own means. In the near future, it is expected that residents and civic associations assume this commitment in favour of their community. MCS is just the beginning of a movement that will make a difference in the district of Évora and, hopefully, will echo throughout the country.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/6/2021

End Date: Ongoing

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



MCS managed to deliver more than 300 household composters in the last quarter of 2021. As from February 2022, a new pilot project is installing 28 community composting islands in 12 municipalities in the district of Évora, some of them are already full.

Within the scope of this initiative, 24 municipal officials (from the 12 municipalities) received specific training. They will be checking the community composting islands on a weekly basis and disseminating good composting practices, thus becoming the Composting Guides.



INFORMATION LINKS

[Re-Plant! - Composting is back. \(re-planta.pt\)](https://re-planta.pt)

[Mission solidary shells - Institutional Portal of the Municipality of Mourão \(cm-mourao.pt\)](https://cm-mourao.pt)

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GREEN SOAP

CATEGORY

Community waste management/recycling programmes

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

35, Konstantinou Karamanli St., Florina, Western Macedonia, Greece

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

Hundreds of used soaps and soap packaging residuals are being produced every day in hotel rooms across the country, and with greater intensity during the summer months when most hotels are traditionally overflowing with tourists.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The Green Soap initiative is a project inspired and carried out by the NGO "Clean Hands", the first soap recycling company in Greece, founded in 2012 by four enthusiastic young people from the border town of Florina in northwestern Macedonia. The NGO "Clean Hands" works with dozens of volunteers, accepts donations from the public and is currently cooperating with around 100 hotels in Greece.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Every hotel that wishes to have their soaps and soap packaging recycled and removed contacts "Clean Hands" and is registered on the platform. A cooperation agreement is signed between the hotel and the company and then a receptacle is placed in the premises of the hotel for the soaps and soap packaging material to be disposed and collected. When the receptacle is full, the used products are removed and brought to the soap recycling unit. The hotel is given the "Greensoap" logo that they can use as part of their environmental practices.



The initiative has multiple benefits for the community. Number one, it recycles tonnes of waste that would otherwise end in landfills, already overflowed with waste all over Greece. Number two, it serves a social purpose, as the recycled soaps are sold at very low prices or given for free to poor and vulnerable consumers. Number three, the initiative raises awareness among the foreign and local tourists about the protection of the environment and the benefits of recycling. Hotel owners are also benefited through a positive environmentally friendly company profile.

Sharing & Learning

Shuza Reeves, manager of a hotel that takes part in the Green Soap project, has written:

“Our hotel has fully integrated the project into its routine. We save money from our general budget, we contribute to the recycling of our products and our premises now look cleaner and tidier than ever”.

Transferability of the Practice

The project can be implemented in all hotel premises that use and provide a substantial number of soaps for their customers. The initiative can be carried out by a social enterprise, an NGO or any other civil society organisation that is committed to the protection of the environment and the advantages of recycling practices. Good management skills and former market experience is helpful but not necessary. The project must be well advertised, and the business plan must be carefully designed.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2012

End Date: Ongoing

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



100 hotels are already part of the Green Soap network, having helped over 11.000 people with financial difficulties benefit from the project. 62 tonnes of recycling material has been collected and tens of thousands of soaps have been recycled. Further on, the N.G.O. offers a variety of educational trainings in schools about the benefits of recycling, as well as healthy advice and the importance of ...washing our hands!



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://www.greensoap.gr/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13LNxWRZGD8&t=14s>

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Photo Sources: <https://www.greensoap.gr/>



NoWaste - GUIDE TO SEPARATE COLLECTION OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE

CATEGORY

Community waste management/recycling programmes

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Bulgaria, City of Sofia

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

The most significant challenge for separate collection is that all citizens must realize their responsibility towards the environment and health of surrounding people and animals, and to make efforts not to throw the batteries, hazardous waste and WEEE generated in each household and offices into the residual waste bins.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The platform NO WASTE is run by the Green Sofia team and informs locals on where to locate the relevant waste collection points and how to become involved in waste collection volunteer campaigns that are organised periodically.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The integrated waste management system of the largest Municipality in Bulgaria – Sofia capital city is in force since 2015. It includes waste recycling, treatment and utilization of the waste as well as separate collection organization. The system is constantly improving and aims to reduce the environmental impact of waste, improve recycling and stimulate investment in waste management in Sofia. In spite of the efforts of Sofia Municipality it is acknowledged that further investments in reducing, reusing, repairing, recycling, recovering and disposing are essential for an efficient and sustainable separate waste collection in the city.



The most significant challenge for separate collection is that of all citizens realising their responsibility towards the environment and health of surrounding people and animals, and to make efforts not to throw the batteries, hazardous waste and WEEE generated in each household and offices into the appropriate residual waste bins.

Addressing this problem “Green Sofia”, part of Sofia Development Agency have developed an online guide NO WASTE. The platform provides information on the different types of waste and how they are disposed or collected. The map of the site through geospatial linking information/data sets and shows the location of the different types of containers for separate waste collection, the municipal sites for secondary raw materials, the reuse and repair centers. The schedules for the collection of construction and bulky waste by region are also available.

Stakeholders involved: Sofia Municipality, Ministry of Environment, citizens, companies, waste operators

Sharing & Learning

Mrs. Desislava Stoyanova, part of Green Sofia Team shared what is important to maintain the platform NO WASTE fully operational:

“The main challenge is the regular update of the information on the site. Sofia is growing fast in population numbers. New production sites, offices and residential areas are opening every day. Here the role of our volunteering campaigns for collection of up-to-date information is of utmost importance.”

Transferability of the Practice

The development of waste management information systems is important for waste prevention. This experience is valuable for other municipalities. Waste prevention is the most efficient way to improve resource efficiency and reduce the environmental impact of waste by setting up and supporting re-use and repair networks and repurchase and refill schemes, and by encouraging re-production, renewal and, where appropriate, re-use of products through information sharing platforms.

Spreading the platform opportunities leads to positive green side effects - waste will be prevented and reused and they will not go to incineration, landfill or be dumped in the landscape.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 1/8/2019

End Date: Ongoing

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



The internet platform is fully operational. The Facebook followers of Green Sofia are more than 5.3K. The results are seen through increased quantity and quality of the recycling materials reported by Sofia Municipality increasing annually: +20% separate waste collected compared to the previous period.



INFORMATION LINKS

<http://waste.sofia.bg>

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THE USELESS PROJECT



CATEGORY

Waste Management and Recycling

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

The Useless project is an Irish based initiative with founders Taz and Geraldine based in Dublin. They host events throughout Ireland making sustainable living and the circular economy information more accessible. Then with their enthusiasm and positivity through their online presence they extend their reach even further.

PROBLEMS TACKLED

We are living in a consumerist throwaway culture where household decisions, from diet, to transport, to recreational spending and everyday decisions are estimated to make up 60-70% of global GHG emissions. While we can't place the blame and burden of change on the consumer, it is clear that we all have a large role to play in being responsible with our everyday spending choices and aim to minimise waste wherever we can. With 93% of people in the EU viewing climate change as a serious issue it is clear that people want to do what they can, but for many, making changes can be daunting as they feel insignificant in the face of the scale of the issue.

The useless project's aim is clear; they want to help people use less and feel less 'useless' in the process.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



The Useless project was set-up by friends Geraldine Carton and Taz Kelleher back in November 2018. Stemming from a shared interest in fashion and the environment, Geraldine and Taz have used their unique skills and interests to build the Useless project into what it is today.

Taz is a podcaster, Graphic Designer and social media manager, working for projects like the World Economic Forum.

Geraldine is an artist, writer and meme connoisseur and their combined skillset makes for an accessible and fun delivery style that helps people use less and feel less useless in the fight against climate change.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



The Useless Project helps people take steps toward more sustainable living through tutorials, workshops, tips on food waste prevention, reuse, second-hand and upcycled fashion for individuals, schools or businesses.



Activities

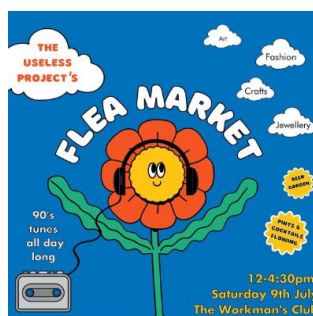
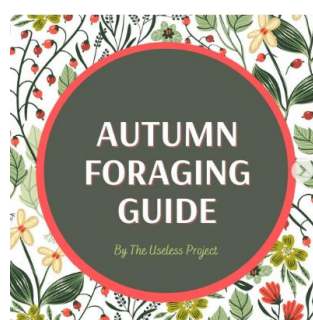
The Useless project started off as a side project called 'Sustainable Fashion Dublin' when the pair shared an interest in sustainable fashion and thrifting. However, once their eyes were opened to the horrors of the fast fashion industry, they began to wonder what else is happening in the world that we don't realise. As Geraldine said, "it's inherently unsustainable to just focus on one area of life", so following a rebrand and a lot of work developing their events and social media presence the Useless project now address issues like recycling, food waste and greenwashing by large corporations.

They now run events (including a monthly flea market!), workshops and provide a wide range of education and awareness-raising resources from DIY upcycling videos and sewing tutorials, to batch-cooking recipes, climate justice deep-dives and listicles of their favourite sustainable brands in Ireland and beyond.

"We're not calling for a small amount of people to be perfectly zero-waste or "100% sustainable". What we want to see is a huge amount of people making incremental positive changes in whatever way they can. So if you're someone who feels useless – just start small. Keep it simple. Just use less"

Evidence of Success

As of the summer of 2022, the useless project has amassed over 45,000 followers online and they hold weekly sold-out events where learners get hands-on solving waste problems and getting in touch with their creative sides at their workshops. Starting from two friends who shared a passion for sustainable fashion, the Useless Projects, positive and accessible approach has helped thousands of people make small incremental changes, reduce waste and feel less useless.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

Start Date: 2018

End Date: Ongoing

Since Taz and Geraldine began in 2018, the useless project has gone on to become one of the biggest sustainability and low waste focused social media pages in Ireland. They are considered thought leaders in Ireland and have been asked to speak at different launch events and on national media, particularly around recycling and low waste movements.





Taz and Geraldine are proof of the impact we can achieve through the use of social media. By starting where they know and looking at where else they can have an influence, they have grown their community of change makers. The Useless project is inspiration for other passionate individuals and friends throughout Europe who may not know where to start. By working on what you know and expanding your sphere of influence you can achieve extraordinary results.



INFORMATION LINKS

<https://www.instagram.com/theuselessproject/>
[Community Resource Network Ireland](#)
[Image Magazine](#)
[Dublin Live](#)

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BALLYLEAGUE RENEWAL'S COMMUNITY COMPOSTING INITIATIVE

CATEGORY

Community waste management/recycling programmes

LOCATION OF THE PRACTICE

Ballyleague, Co. Roscommon

PROBLEM THAT TACKLES

The lack of provision of a community-based composter in this particular local area. Therefore prior to this initiative vast amounts of organic material were going to landfill for disposal. There was also a need for the delivery of a comprehensive community composting training programme.

VOLUNTEERING ASSOCIATION OR PERSONS INVOLVED



A Voluntary community group working for tidy towns and a variety of village development projects in Ballyleague on the Roscommon - Longford border. There is a core group of 12 members and the wider community assist as needed.

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICE



Community Composting in Ballyleague village has developed centralized facilities which serve the village and divert significant quantities of organic materials from disposal. Composting locally at the community-level yields many other benefits: social inclusion and empowerment, green aware communities, improved local soils, enhanced food security and fewer food deserts, less truck traffic hauling garbage, more local jobs, and increased composting know-how and skills within the local workforce that is reinforced in the next generation.



Composting is small-scale in that it is locally based and involves community participation which is underpinned by an education programme. When materials are collected and transported out of the community for processing, few if any of these benefits are realised at the local level. In addition, community-scale operations moved from concept to operation in a relatively short time frame in Ballyleague.

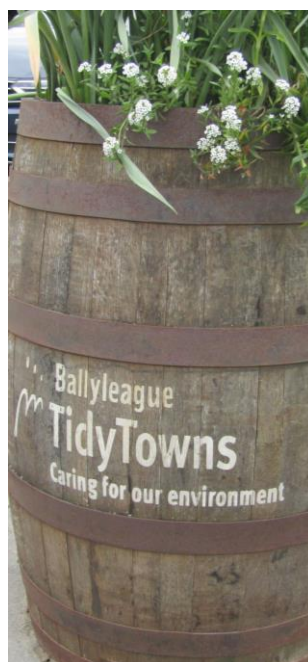
The main aims and activities implemented in the community computing are:

- Resources recovered: Waste is reduced; food scraps and other organic materials are diverted from disposal and composted.
- Locally based and closed loop: Organic materials are a community asset and are generated and recycled into compost within the same community.
- Organic materials returned to soils: Compost is used to enhance local soils, support local food production, and conserve natural ecology by improving soil structure and maintaining nutrients, carbon, and soil micro-organisms.
- Community-scaled and diverse: Composting infrastructure is diverse, distributed, and sustainable; systems are scaled to meet the needs of a self-defined community of Ballyleague
- The Ballyleague Community is engaged, empowered, and educated: compost programming engages and educates the community in food systems thinking, resource stewardship, or community sustainability while providing solutions that empower individuals, businesses, and institutions to capture organic waste and retain it as a community resource.
- Community supported: aligns with community goals (such as healthy soils and healthy Ireland programme) and is supported by the community it serves. The reverse is true, too; a community composting programme supports community social, economic, and environmental well-being.

Sharing & Learning:

Mr. Gerry Trimble, Chairperson of Ballyleague Renewal and Tidy Towns Committee said

“the training enabled me to understand that different materials break down at different rates, grass on its own won’t provide compost but mixed with leaves it attracts the earth worms which enables compost to be made. To make compost is a process, by turning grass and leaves into compost has saved us a lot of money as we no longer have to buy any composts for our tidy town work”.



IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD (START/END DATE)

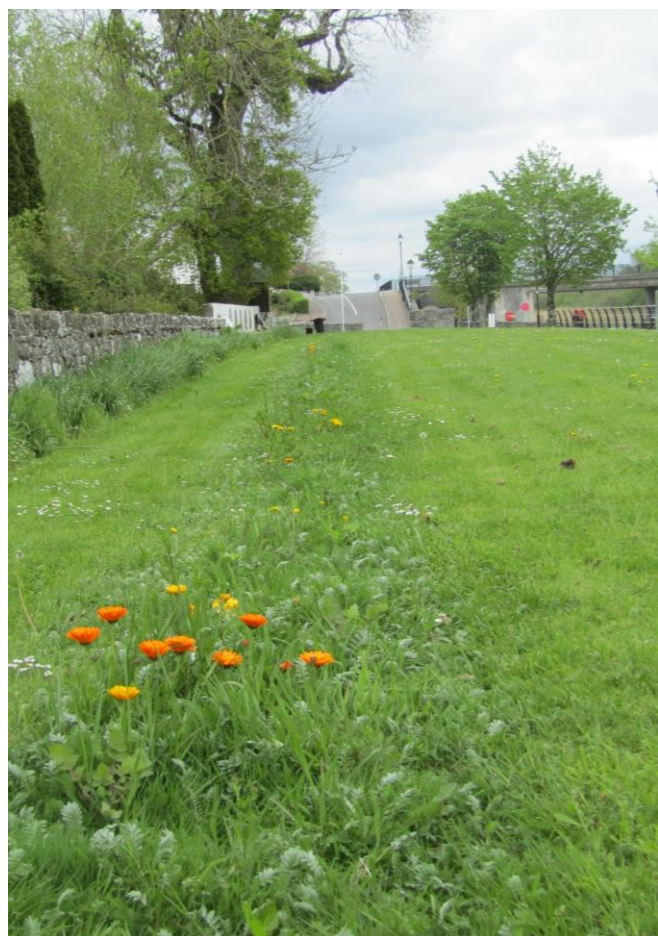
Start Date: 1/4/2018

End Date: 13/5/2022

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS (RESULTS ACHIEVED)



- Sixteen village members were upskilled to become competent composters.
- The community composting programme has saved the local tidy towns an enormous amount of money every year in the purchase of compost.
- The compost produced has reduced the need for chemical fertilisers and produces higher-yielding grass and plants.
- Ballyleague community composting initiative uses good composting practices thereby minimising greenhouse gas emissions. The use of compost provides numerous greenhouse gas benefits, both directly through carbon sequestration and indirectly through improved soil health, reduced soil loss, increased water infiltration and storage, and reduction in other inputs.



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