

Foreword

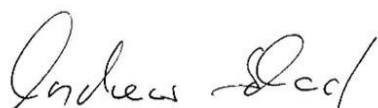
While actively pursuing sustainable development and seeking to deepen its regional and European Union (EU) integration, North Macedonia is faced with important challenges around climate change, rising resource demand and pollution. To proactively confront these issues, the country is embracing the pursuit of a circular economy – a cornerstone of the Green Agenda of the Western Balkans – which is gaining traction due to its key role in addressing pressing economic concerns, while contributing to national and regional environmental objectives.

North Macedonia's Ministry of Economy, in collaboration with other governmental bodies and stakeholders, is at the helm of the shift to a circular economy throughout Macedonian society. The government has developed national strategic documents addressing the transition and there have also been noticeable shifts in civil society and among businesses. Despite these initial strides, tangible outcomes have been restricted by infrastructure limitations, limited stakeholder awareness and knowledge, and insufficient financial support.

This roadmap applies the OECD's circular economy methodology to explore North Macedonia's approach to these challenges with the goal of assisting the government in building a strong policy foundation for an impactful circular transition. Based on a comprehensive assessment of North Macedonia's circular economy landscape, the roadmap incorporates current policy efforts, promoting synergies across the many sectors, policy measures and parties involved in this transformative journey. It offers a detailed analysis that highlights a set of crucial priority areas for developing circular economy policies in North Macedonia. Complemented by a monitoring framework, the roadmap presents concrete policy recommendations on circular business models for small and medium-sized enterprises, moving construction towards circularity, transitioning the biomass and food industries, making the textile sector more circular, and transforming the mining and metallurgy sectors.

Integrating reforms for sustainable economic growth and implementing action plans for the green agenda are vital for fostering the production of sustainable products within the Common Regional Market. This approach, and the paradigm shift driven by circular economy principles, not only paves the way for access to the EU single market, but also underlines the commitment to environmental sustainability and economic resilience in alignment with EU standards.

The roadmap was produced by the OECD's South East Europe and Environment and Economy Integration Divisions, co-ordinated by the OECD South East Europe Regional Programme. It benefitted from contributions from a broad spectrum of Macedonian circular economy stakeholders, headed by the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of North Macedonia. The work is co-funded by the European Union as part of the "EU support to Competitiveness and Sustainability in the Western Balkans and Türkiye" project, which aims to reinforce economic governance and integration, and strengthen resilient and competitive markets.



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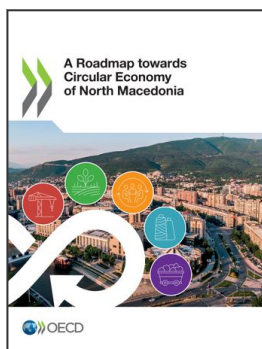
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