

## FINLAND

# Green futures

### Location

Jyväskylä

### Programming period

2014 – 2020

### Priority

P6 – Social inclusion & local development

### Measure

M07 – Farm & business development

### Funding (EUR)

Total budget 111 056.70  
EAFRD 41 979.43  
National/Regional 57 971.60  
Private/own funds 11 105.67

### Project duration

2019 – 2021

### Project promoter

Jyväskylän kestävä kehitys  
JAPA ry and Jyvässeudun 4H-  
yhdistys

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The ReWi project inspires young people to examine entrepreneurship from the perspective of the circular economy. The project has opened up a wide range of opportunities for young people, resulting in 40 new circular economy enterprises.

## Summary

ReWi Visions is a prime example of the power of a LAG cooperation project under the RDP that combines circular economy expertise, entrepreneur networks and association activities with inspiring youth activities of the 4H association in the Jyväskylä region.

ReWi Visions promotes circular economy entrepreneurship among young people, integrating the circular economy into traditional youth work and lifelong learning.



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It particularly encourages professionals working with young people to learn more about the circular economy and encourage professionals working with the circular economy to take the perspectives of young people into account.

Project activities concentrate on youth exchanges, international communication, promoting youth circular economy entrepreneurship with business courses and youth club activities. All of these are available in Rewitellen manuals and videos.

## Results

Impressively, 40 companies with circular economy themes have already been established by young people through the project.

The initial club activities of young people in the region have expanded and a second club was established within the region.

International cooperation continued despite the Covid-19 situation and it was possible to pilot mentor activities between entrepreneurs and young people.

The Rewitellen manual has been published and the video series gives young people a voice on the theme.

## Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ The project is implemented by the Jyväskylä Sustainable Development Association and the Jyvässeudun 4H, part of the international 4H youth development programme. Some cooperation was spontaneous, and the network continues to expand.
- ❑ The project is transferrable internationally, with high interest already shown in other EU and non-EU regions and countries. The project was also presented at the LINC2019 event, the European LEADER Conference.
- ❑ The Rewitellen manual and videos will be translated into English so information can be disseminated to a wider audience.
- ❑ In addition to support from EAFRD, and other national and regional sources, funding for youth exchanges was received from the Erasmus+ programme. The circular economy theme is directly related to the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork strategy.

## Context

The project is based on a preliminary study that reviewed the circular economy in relation to young people. Young people are interested in the circular economy but applying this theme in practice creates difficulties.

In workshops, solutions were discussed, including everyday personal life choices in a flexible manner. Young people actively seek solutions to problems that concern them. One way is through entrepreneurship; young people are interested in strengthening their work skills and actively developing their own career path.

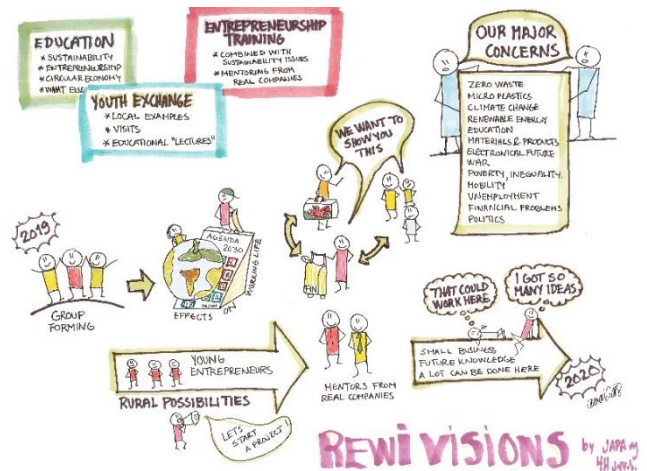
Understanding the basic principles of the circular economy is essential for future work. Employees and entrepreneurs have a responsibility to act sustainably, but sustainable development and the circular economy are not yet integrated sufficiently into today's entrepreneurship education. In addition, the project found that young people needed to recognise the strengths of their area and broaden their role in local communities.

During the preliminary study, the need to examine circular economy themes outside Finland was also highlighted. Although the theme is familiar to most, the integration of young people and working life was relatively new for international partners. Visiting activities play a key role in understanding different networks and operating models.

Consideration of circular economy themes differs between countries and regions. The preliminary study identified the important need to incorporate the circular economy into youth work, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning. This requires professionals working with young people to exchange knowledge on circular economy themes, and for people working with the circular economy to take the perspective of young people into account.

## Objectives

1. Strengthen young people's future entrepreneurial and work skills from the perspective of the circular economy and local communities:
  - Creating circular economy networks between young people and companies.
  - Encouraging young people and local communities to identify and develop new circular economy ideas, with a target of 10 new enterprises by the end of the project.
  - Involving young people (for example at school) in their own operating environment.



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2. Exchange information locally and internationally
  - Sharing best practices, getting to know international circular economy solutions and opportunities in rural areas, and youth entrepreneurship.
  - Sharing information on how young entrepreneurs, circular economy companies and education professionals network in local communities and companies to promote the circular economy.
3. Develop a practical model of circular economy entrepreneurship training needs for provision by education professionals and others working with young people

## Activities

Measures have mostly been carried out in parallel. Youth exchanges, club activities and company courses were a basis for the Rewitellen manual and video series and for testing different tools available. Background work continuously disseminated project measures with international partners.

The Youth Exchange Week was used to test the model for the handbook, in cooperation with Muurame upper secondary school and Pembrokeshire College in the UK. While some activities had to be cancelled, the open communication and exchanges were maintained. During the Muurami Youth Exchange Week, the region's circular economy locations were visited daily before the Covid-19 period. Lessons, including visits and presentations, were used to address the challenge issued at the beginning of the exchange of developing a viable circular economy company in a rural area.

The circular economy theme was highlighted at each stage of a company- from establishment to operation, and existing companies also received help to make changes. For example, a nail studio entrepreneur changed to durable products and bought a biogas car; a home service entrepreneur made insect hotels that increase biodiversity; and one young entrepreneur started repairing smartphones. It was important to highlight different circular economy business models, beyond mere recycling.

Cooperation with the Leader Holland Rijnland group in the Netherlands and LAG Arwain Sir Pembro in Wales has been very successful. There have been exchange visits with the Netherlands. cooperation and contacts remained, despite the Covid-19 situation and online interaction was introduced immediately at the beginning of the Covid-19 situation, to enable transnational cooperation with the EU and beyond.

There is an optional entrepreneurship course for students at Tikkakoski School as a result of the project.

## Main results

Impressively, 40 young people's companies with circular economy themes have already been established.

The club activities of young people in the Jyväskylä region expanded and a second club was established.

As a result of the youth exchanges between Muurame upper secondary school and Pembrokeshire College, a Welsh student completed their thesis on the circular economy.

Despite the Covid-19 situation, it was possible to pilot mentor activities between entrepreneurs and young people.

The project inspired the Dutch LAG to reflect on the circular economy and include young people. Cooperation will continue beyond online activity when the Covid-19 situation eases.

The Rewitellen manual covers the circular economy and tools combined with practical examples.

The Rewitellen video series gives young people a voice on the theme. One video has been published and the rest will be published in spring 2021. In addition, a Rewitellen webinar series will be launched.

## Key lessons

Cooperation between the two implementing organisations, JAPA (Jyväskylä Sustainable Development Association) and Jyvässeudun 4H has ensured success. Some cooperation was spontaneous, and the network has expanded and will expand as the activities progress.

The methods for young peoples' participation have attracted interest in the LAG in the Netherlands. During the project visit to Wales, the workshop as outlined in the manual was presented as an example of an inclusive data collection method. The project was also presented at the LINC2019 event

The manual and videos will be translated into English so information can also be widely disseminated.

In addition to EAFRD support, funding for youth exchanges was also received from the Erasmus+ programme. The circular economy is related to, inter alia, the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork strategy.

*'Entrepreneurship and sustainable development – the perfect match!' - Aki Puustinen, headmaster of the Muurame upper secondary school*

*A young person who participated in the exchange: 'The week taught me a lot of things. I became confident interacting in both English and my mother tongue. Of course, I learned about the circular economy, sustainable development and entrepreneurship and the culture of Wales. I must say that I also learned a great deal about Central Finland. I noticed that people can understand each other in spite of different backgrounds. I did not expect in advance how great an experience the project would turn out.'*

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## Additional sources of information

[www.japary.fi/rewitellen](http://www.japary.fi/rewitellen)

[www.facebook.com/japattaja](https://www.facebook.com/japattaja)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ArjCPZkpFA4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ArjCPZkpFA4)

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