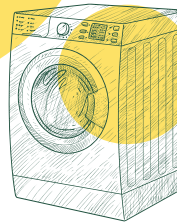
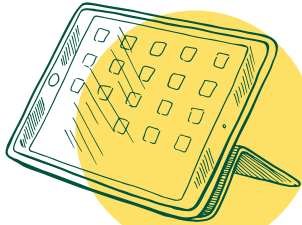
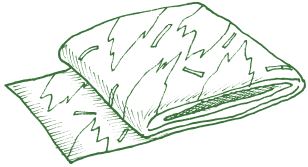
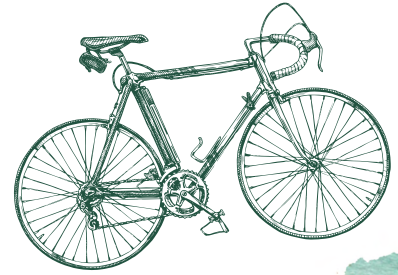


# ACTIVITY REPORT 2021





PUT  
SECOND HAND  
FIRST

reuse

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT MATTHIAS NEITSCH



The fast-paced reality of the post-COVID world revealed some undeniable truths for our sector:

**“ We are facing the challenge of transforming the production-based linear economy into a circular value preservation economy. ”**

This requires the rapid and radical transformation of the growth-driven global industrial mass production of new goods towards a local and regional value preservation and redistribution of existing goods, based on human labour and globally shared digitalized information exchange. But: Without a more socially just distribution of income, participation and wealth, this transformation will probably not be accepted by the people.

RREUSE has contributed important impulses on the European level to push this transformation and will even more do so in the future. The vision that we share with so many other NGOs and individuals, and only recently also with EU institutions is a good life for all and a global well-being economy, as laid out in the 8th Environment Action Programme (EAP).

## ABOUT RREUSE

Since 2001, **RREUSE** has been supporting the development of social enterprises active in the circular economy. The members of the RREUSE network specialise in the field of re-use, repair, and recycling, and provide local and inclusive employment as well as a strong sense of belonging for the most vulnerable in our societies.

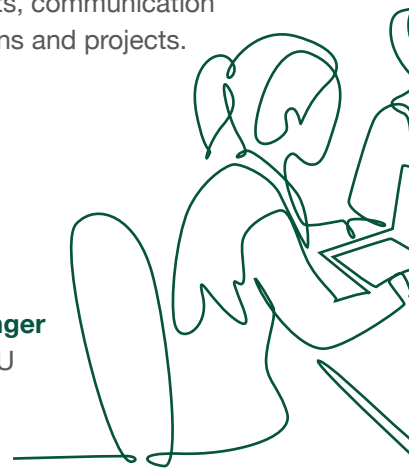
The RREUSE network is coordinated by the Brussels Based RREUSE Secretariat which carries out the following actions in cooperation with its members:



**Representing, promoting and communicating about the social enterprise re-use, repair and recycling sector** and its activities to European and international stakeholders through events, communication actions and projects.



**Advocating for a stronger policy framework** at EU level to support social enterprise activities in environmental services, notably through the EU Circular Economy and Social Economy Action Plans.



**Gathering unique data on the re-use and repair sector** from its members and producing value-added analysis to showcase the impact of our sector.



**Facilitating exchange of contacts, best practice examples and local, national and legal developments** among social enterprises working in the field of re-use, repair and recycling through dedicated member sessions and tailored communication channels.



**Acting as partner in international projects** aimed at further developing the reuse, repair, and recycling sector in cooperation with universities, local authorities and research centres on both environmental and social issues.





# WHAT OUR MEMBERS AND WIDER SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK DO



**Advocacy at local, regional and national levels** and sharing of best social and circular practices



**Home, community and cooperative composting**, food banks management and food distribution services



**Collection, sorting and redistribution** of 24 product and material streams, including textiles, electronics and furniture



**Provision of job, training and skills opportunities** to individuals at risk of socio-economic exclusion



**Operating second-hand retail outlets** offering essential goods accessible to individuals of all income levels

A black and white photograph of a modern interior space. In the foreground, there is a long, low wooden bench with a patterned fabric cushion. A yellow circular highlight is placed over the bench. In the background, there is a wooden table and another bench. The ceiling has a series of small, round lights.

## 2021 IN NUMBERS

### Involvement in 5 European Expert Groups, Stakeholder Platforms and European Networks

- ➔ European Commission's Expert Group on Social Economy and Social Enterprises (GECES)
- ➔ European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform Coordination Group (ECESP)
- ➔ European Commission's Ecodesign and Energy labelling Consultation Forum (Ecodesign CF)
- ➔ Social Platform
- ➔ ECOS

12

43

Internal Member  
Meetings

117

Events attended

13

Answers to  
Policy  
Consultations

10

International  
events organised

31

Speaking  
engagements

9

Position Papers  
& Reports  
published

14

News items  
shared

5

Media Outlets  
mentioning  
RREUSE

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS



+404  
(+19%)

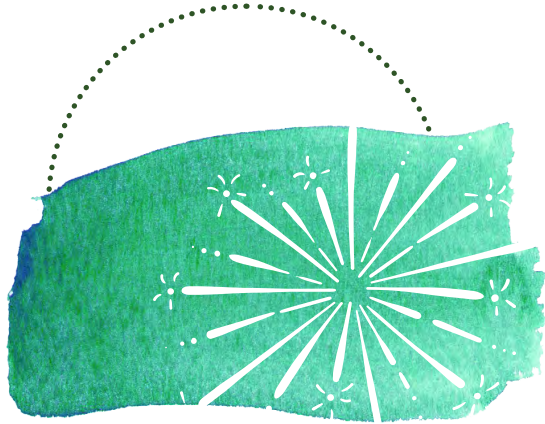


+175  
(+8%)



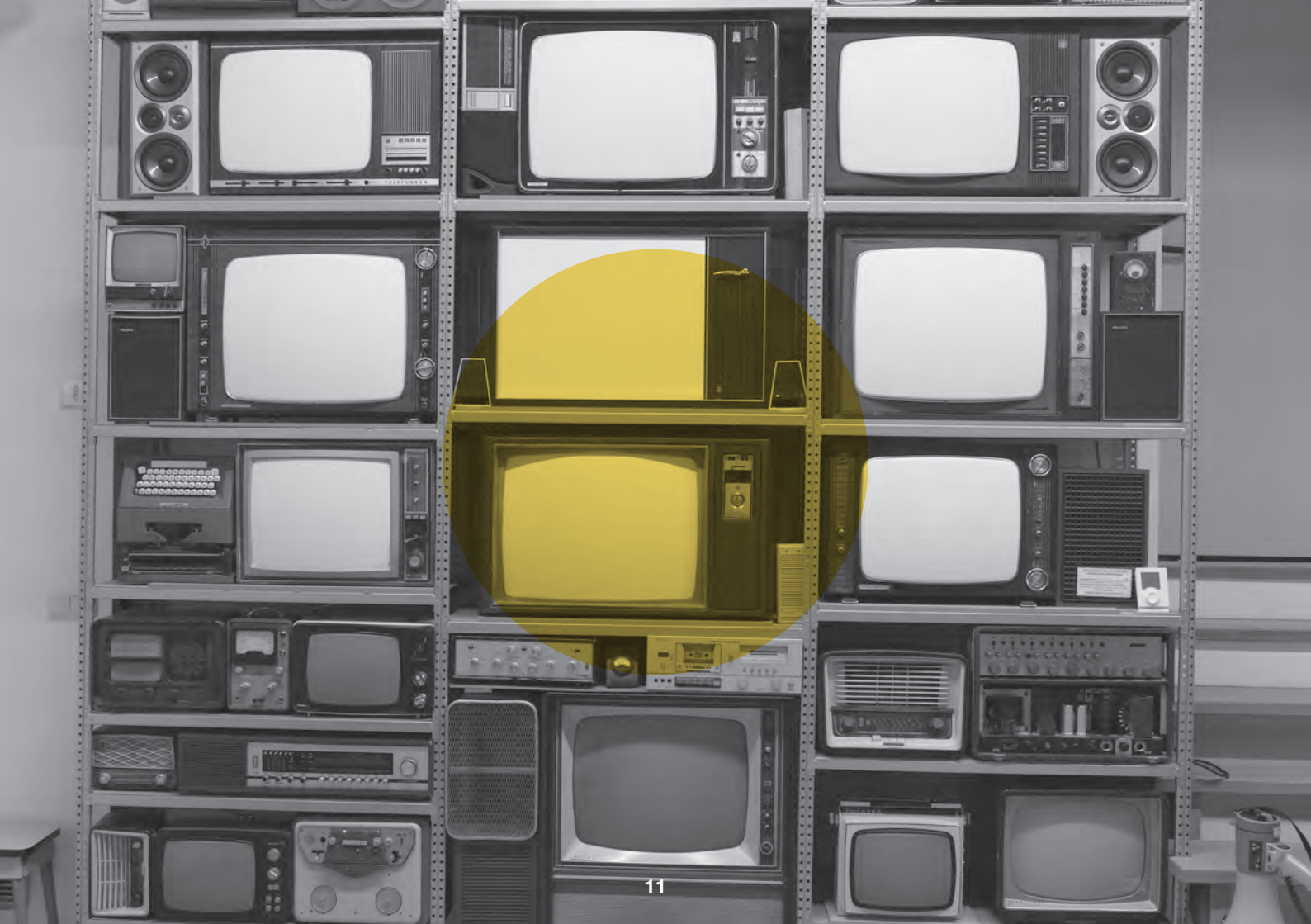
+164  
(+8%)

345



## 20 YEARS OF RREUSE

RREUSE celebrated its 20th birthday in 2021! By hitting this milestone, we mark two decades of supporting social enterprises through advocating for a fair, just, and socially inclusive circular economy. The anniversary provided a great opportunity to look back at RREUSE's impact and the growth that has been achieved. We warmly thank all current and past RREUSE members, staff and supporters for their support over the years, and for enabling us to get to where we are today. We aim even higher for the future and hope to have an even stronger impact by the time we turn 30.






## EU ADVOCACY & IMPACT IN 2021

Creating synergies between the EU's social, environmental and economic policy agenda continues to be a priority of RREUSE, mirroring the socio-economic and environmental objectives of its membership base of social enterprises.

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

Despite the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, 2021 bore yet more fruits of RREUSE's advocacy work, particularly regarding the publication of the Social Economy Action Plan (SEAP) and its strong acknowledgement and support for our social and circular sector. Through our advocacy in 2021, RREUSE insisted that social objectives such as job creation and social inclusion need to be an inherent part of environmental and economic policies created at EU level.



A series of actions helped further promote our goals and vision:

- ➔ Published and disseminated tailored position papers and data briefings during the formulation of the Social Economy Action Plan (SEAP).
- ➔ Supported the OECD in developing a policy briefing on supporting the role of social enterprises active in the circular economy (published February 2022).
- ➔ Participated in frequent policy consultations processes on the SEAP as member of the European Commission's Expert Group of Social Enterprise and Social Economy (GECES).
- ➔ Organised internal and external discussions and workshops with members concerning social enterprise resilience during times of crises and policy needs to help develop their activities.
- ➔ RREUSE's Contribution to UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: In late 2021, we released a briefing outlining the contribution of social enterprises active in the circular economy to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).



## ENVIRONMENT POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

2021 marked many important moments for the re-use sector, and for the RREUSE network in the field of Environmental Policy. The main focus of our work was on ensuring that circular policies related to waste, textiles and electronics, prioritise re-use and repair first:

Some standout moments include:



RREUSE was chosen as Chair of the Leadership Group on textiles within the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform. Furthermore, RREUSE participated in an #EUCircularTalks event, where expert stakeholders discussed the developments around setting EPR schemes for textiles.



RREUSE also responded to the Public Consultation on the EU Strategy for Sustainable Textiles ahead of the release of the EU Strategy for Sustainable Textiles, with recommendations to ensure the Strategy prioritises activities related to waste prevention and preparation for re-use of waste textiles.

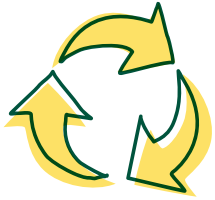


RREUSE responded to the consultation on an EU Sustainable Product Initiative in anticipation of the release of the Sustainable Products Initiative (SPI), encouraging the European Commission to develop solutions wherein independent operators and consumers are included in the process.



RREUSE contributed to the Waste Framework Directive by providing input and commenting on the development of a harmonized EU model for the separate collection of municipal waste with a series of suggestions on the relevant discussion paper.





## POLICY SUCCESS HIGHLIGHTS

### SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL

Our social and environmental policy actions saw success in shaping EU decisions and raising awareness:



**The EU Waste Framework Directive** enforced a new rule stating that the Member States must start measuring re-use and monitor and assess the implementation of waste prevention measures, a key moment, ahead of potential EU targets for re-use and preparation for re-use by 2025.



Combined with work from 2018, we were able to contribute effectively to the creation of the EU's **Social Economy Action Plan**, lasting a period of nine years, providing a new bridge connecting the EU's social, environmental and economic agendas and strongly recognising and supporting social enterprises active in the circular economy. RREUSE's positions and data were quoted within the action plan and its supporting documents.

## KEY PUBLICATIONS



**ZWE/RREUSE Guidance to municipalities on Re-use:** RREUSE and the Zero Waste Cities Programme by our long-time partner Zero Waste Europe partnered to create a briefing aimed at providing support to local municipalities to help design effective and ambitious local re-use strategies.



**Job creation in the re-use sector:** Data insights from social enterprises: RREUSE released a briefing which outlines the value that social economy enterprises bring to the circular economy in terms of job creation, focusing on the upper levels of the waste hierarchy, notably re-use and preparation for re-use activities.



**RREUSE'S Contribution to the UN's 2030 Agenda:** RREUSE published a briefing outlining the contribution of social enterprises active in the circular economy to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).



## EVENTS

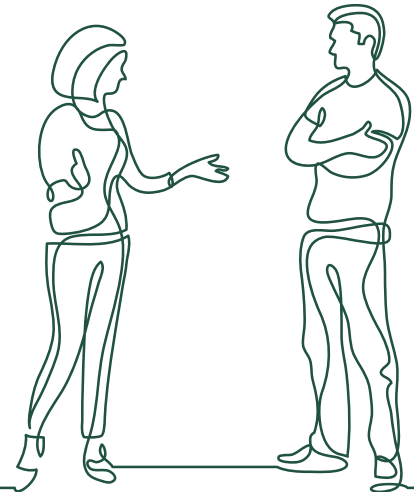
In 2021, despite the difficulties the COVID-19 pandemic presented in terms of organising events, RREUSE had an active role in the organisation and execution of a series of events throughout the year:



**2nd Re-use & Repair Online Study Tour for Municipalities and Public Waste Companies:** RREUSE organised a Re-use and Repair Study Tour for the second time, tailored for representatives of local, regional and national authorities, municipalities and public waste companies.



We organised two **workshops on social enterprise resilience and buying green and social** with our members in the spotlight in the context of the Mannheim European Social Economy Summit.



# RREUSE 20th Anniversary

The 20th anniversary of RREUSE presented opportunities for unique and insightful events, as well as a reflection on how far the sector has come and how it is evolving within a changing economic and political landscape.

## 20th Anniversary Conference

RREUSE's Annual Conference took place as part of the 20th anniversary celebrations on 16 November 2021.

Our Annual Conference focused on the **“The evolution of social enterprises in the circular Economy: Past, Present and Future”**. The online event welcomed over 100 participants, and provided the perfect opportunity to consider how social value is being reflected in European environmental policy, as well as engage in thought sharing sessions among our social enterprise community on our growing contribution to a future inclusive circular economy. Thank you to all our fantastic guest speakers from the **European Commission, EEB, ENSIE, Revaluate** as well as members **RESSOURCES, Label Emmaus, De Kringloper** and **Circular Communities Scotland**.

## Let's get talking

RREUSE organised three “Let's get talking” sessions that explored social value in the circular transition. For the first two episodes of the series, **Adam Minter**, a columnist at Bloomberg Opinion and author of



*Secondhand: Travels in the New Global Garage Sale* and *Junkyard Planet: Travels in the Billion-Dollar Trash Trade*, and **Lakshmi Narayan**, co-founder of the trade union Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat (KKPKP) and SWaCH who has also worked with waste pickers since 1989, joined RREUSE to explore the social dimension within the circular transition. The discussions addressed different interpretations of what social value means, how it can be better reflected within the circular economy.

For the third and final episode of the “Let's get talking” series, RREUSE met with EU Commissioner **Virginijus Sinkevičius**. The main goals of the meeting were to identify the meaning of social value for the Commissioner, to discuss the role of the Circular Economy in delivering social value, as well as to locate opportunities for mutual support between the Social Economy Action Plan and the Circular Economy Action Plan.

# PROJECTS

In 2021, RREUSE continued its involvement in two European projects:



In 2021, two EU projects in which RREUSE was involved ended:



# MEMBERS

## Austria

- RepaNet



## Belgium

- HERWIN
- RESSOURCES



## Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Association Citizens "Hands"



## Croatia

- Humana Nova



## Estonia

- Uuskasutuskeskus



## Finland

- Tramel
- Kierrätyskeskus Oy

TRAMEL



## France

- Emmaüs France
- Envie



## Germany

- Fairwertung
- Wird



## Greece

- Ecological Recycling Society
- Klimax Plus



## Hungary

- Humusz Szövetség



### Pan-european Networks

- Emmaüs Europe



### Italy

- Rete 14 Luglio
- Insieme



### Lithuania

- Circular Economy Lithuania



### Netherlands

- Branchevereniging Kringloopbedrijven Nederland



### Poland

- EKON



### Serbia

- Ekolozi bez granica



### Slovenia

- Dobrote z.b.o



### Spain

- AERESS



### Romania

- Ateliere Fără Frontiere Association



### United Kingdom

- Circular communities Scotland
- Now! Charity



### Ireland

- Community Reuse Network Ireland
- Rediscovery Center
- Rehab Recycle



### USA

- donateNYC



## MEMBERS

## MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

In 2021 RREUSE welcomed two new members! Ateliere Fără Frontiere Association (AFF) and Ekolozi bez granica joined the RREUSE network, expanding RREUSE's membership in Central and Eastern Europe bringing the total number of members to 31.



**Ateliere Fără Frontiere Association (AFF)** is a Romanian non-profit organisation, founded in 2008, for the social, professional and civic insertion of vulnerable, excluded and marginalized people, part of SOS Group – International action, a global network working to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Ateliere Fără Frontiere has created 3 social insertion enterprises – the reconnect workshop, the remesh workshop and

the bio farm. Through these economic activities, it offers personalized social support services, insertion counselling, psychotherapy and pedagogical support for skills training for people with multiple difficulties.



**Ekolozi bez granica (EBG)** is a non-governmental, non-profit, non-partisan and voluntary association of citizens for environmental protection founded in 2020 and is based in Belgrade. Through its work, EBG wants to contribute to the improvement of the environmental protection system at the local, national and global levels by encouraging changes through campaigns, non-violent direct action,

projects, public participation in decision-making, etc. The aim of their work is to protect the environment and nature, and encourage development towards a low-carbon society while being guided by the principles of social justice and systemic change. EBG pays close attention to activities aimed at encouraging public participation in decision-making regarding environmental issues and improving the quality of life in Serbia. They also share information, experience, and expertise in the field of environmental protection with other organizations, individuals, communities, schools, etc. in Serbia and beyond.

In 2021 we celebrated a series of network achievements. Some moments that deserve the spotlight are:



**Five ways in which social enterprises embrace and innovate the rising bike culture.** For the first time, data for 2019 in Germany shows that electric bikes were sold in higher numbers than diesel cars. It is estimated that the overall bike industry employs around 281,000 people in Germany alone. The RREUSE members are running projects helping citizens, municipalities and re-use centres to embrace the potential of biking.



**Back to school? Save money and the environment through second-hand!** Whilst children require certain products to go to class and learn, many of these goods have a limited lifespan, often being used for one single year before ending up in landfill. The RREUSE Network offered a series of sustainable alternatives.







МИНИСТЕРСТВО КУЛЬТУРЫ СССР  
МЕЛОДИЯ  
СТЕРЕО  
ГОСТ 5280-73  
С82-09219  
ЛЕВ БАРАШКОВ  
ДАЛЕК ТОТ ДЕНЬ (в. Милорадов-А. Жигарева)  
УЛЫБКА (в. Шаинский-М. Паляковский)  
Вос. тр. «Советская песня»  
Ансамбль «Мелодия»  
и. у. Г. Гаранни

## THE TEAM



**Director**  
Michal Len



**Financial Manager**  
Paolo Ferraresi



**Network  
Development  
and Innovation  
Manager**  
Jana Žůrková



**Communication  
and Advocacy  
Officer**  
Kelly Piron



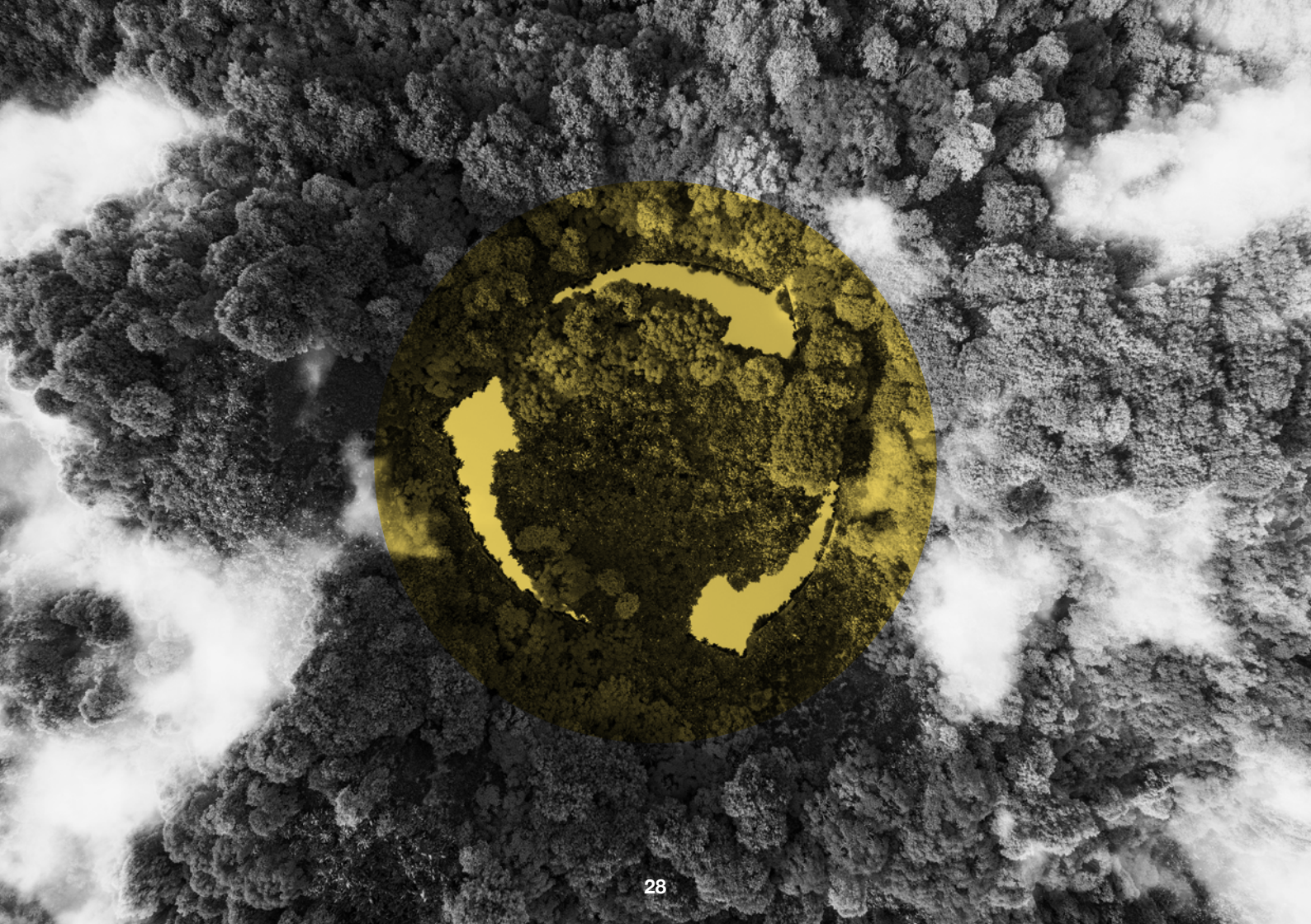
**Policy Officer –  
Social Affairs (until  
November 2021)**  
Julija Kekstaite



**Policy Officer –  
Environment**  
Mathieu Rama



**Research Assistant**  
Oscar Plannels



# FINANCIAL REPORT

## EXPENDITURE

Consultants	Office costs	Travel-Subsistence	Conference-seminars	Staff	Depreciation	Interests/ Bank charges	TOTAL
€ 20.326	€ 39.135	€ 2.719	€ -	€ 319.659	€ 2.449	€ 275	<b>€ 384.564</b>
						Exceptional charges	€ 13.646
						<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>€ 398.209</b>

## INCOME

Conference Fees	Membership fees	European Commission Operating Grant	Other private contributions	Other income	TOTAL
€ 1.700	€ 55.250	€ 311.407	17.026	€ 1.500	<b>€ 386.883</b>
				Exceptional income	€ 542
				<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>€ 387.425</b>
<b>END OF YEAR RESULT 2021</b>					<b>- € 10.784</b>

**RREUSE** is grateful for financial support from its member organisations, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Interreg Europe, Interreg Central Europe and LIFE+ programme.



**RREUSE** is grateful for the support of the EU Commission's Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI". The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission. RREUSE is a member of the European Social Platform and ECOS.



## LEARN MORE AND REACH OUT TO US!

[www.rreuse.org](http://www.rreuse.org)



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RREUSE\_Brussels



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RREUSE



SIGN UP

to our newsletter for concise and neatly  
packaged information on what's new in  
the world of re-use!



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