



CIRCULAR ECONOMY

BEYOND

WASTE



Sustainable Consumption via citizen involvement?

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Agenda

- About the Citizens' Assembly on Sustainable Consumption
- The process with the citizens
- The recommendations – and implementation



About the Citizens' Assembly on Sustainable Consumption



Circular Economy Beyond Waste

EU-funded project (Life IP)

The project runs from **2022 to 2029**, with most activities taking place in the early part of the period

33 partners: Municipalities, regions, the EPA, waste management companies etc.

Project lead: Central Denmark Region

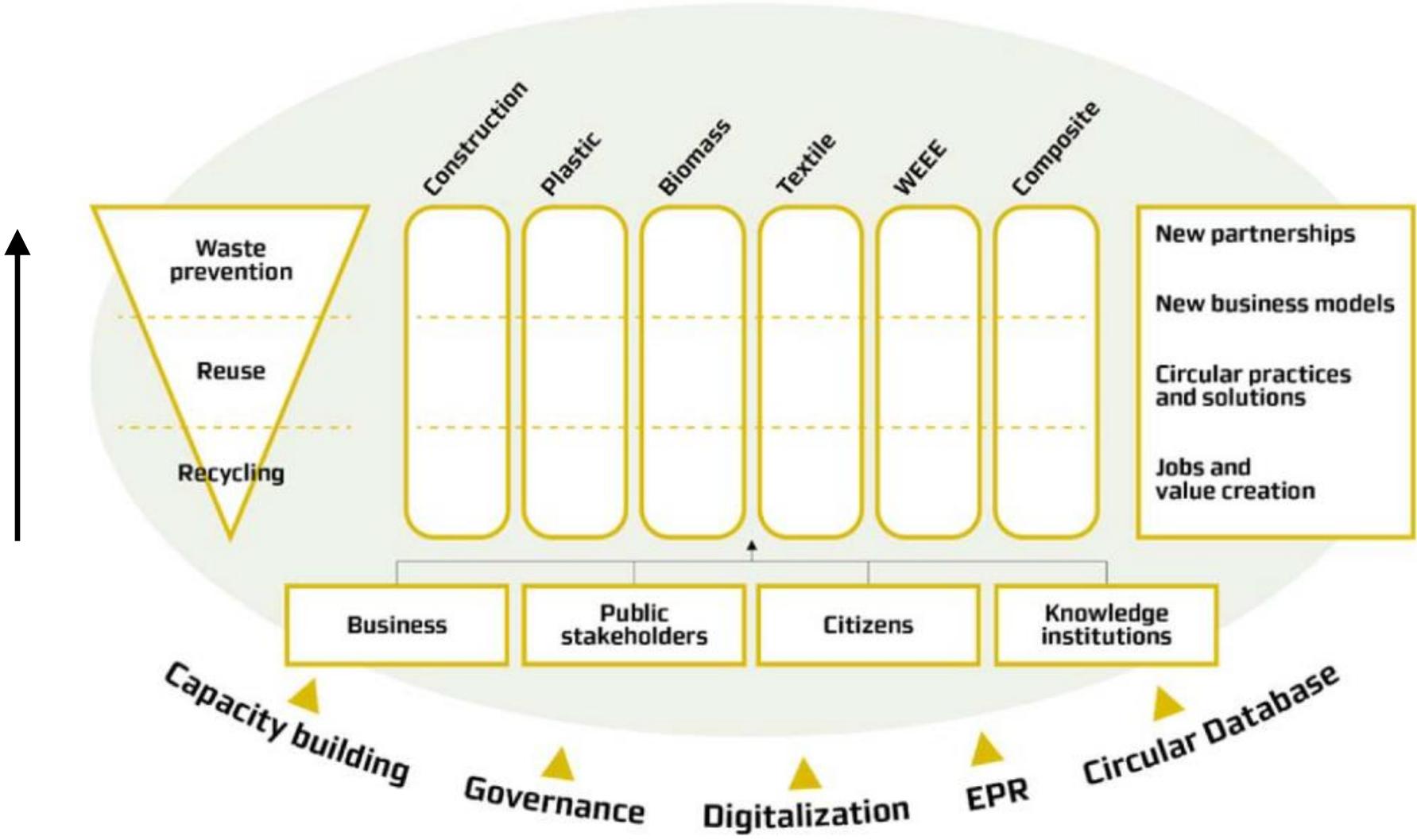
Purpose: Contribute to the implementation of the national waste management plan and the circular transition in Denmark

www.cebeyondwaste.eu



CE Beyond Waste

Working towards the top of the waste hierarchy



Citizens' Assembly on Sustainable Consumption



- **Partners:** Capital Region, Southern Denmark Region + Frederiksberg, Rudersdal, Vejle Municipalities
- **Timeline:** Sept. 2022 – april 2023 (and subsequently political processing, pilot projects and other implementing measures in 2024-2025)
- **50 Citizens** – representative sample of Danish population
- **5 weekends** – experts, stakeholders, deliberation
- **3 themes** – food, transport, housing

Citizens' Assembly on Sustainable Consumption



- **A vision** for a future with sustainable consumption
- **Recommendations** for the politicians
- **Ambition:** Untie the knot of politicians and citizens waiting for each other
 - Encourage & inspire **politicians**
 - Involve & engage **citizens**

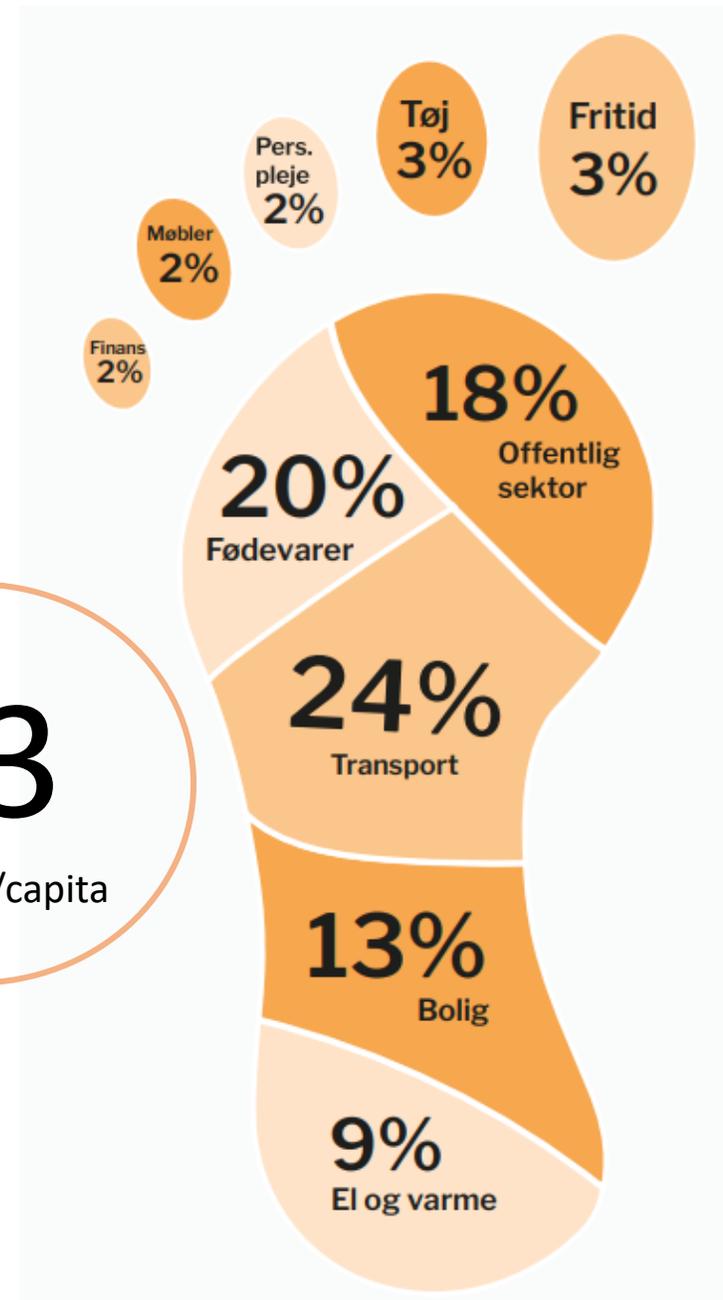


The average Dane's consumption carbon footprint

- **2/3 of the global carbon emissions** are related to household consumption = lifestyles
- Paris agreement 1,5 degree goal would require around **2,5 ton CO2/year/citizen** in 2030

(Source: UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2020)

13
ton/year/capita



Source: CONCITO, 2023

The process with the citizens



The process

- 5 gatherings (weekends/saturdays)
- Professional presentations from experts
 - Planetary boundaries, consumption's climate footprint, justice, tools, narratives...
- Inspiration/emotions:
 - Personal stories; future meditations; poems; citizens' own pictures...
- Input from stakeholders (panel discussion)
- Group discussions
 - Gradually formulate vision & recommendations



The process

- Online evening theme meetings
 - Food, transportation, housing/construction
- An open citizens' meeting halfway through
- Online Q&A session
- Citizen working groups
- Citizen editorial group
- Voting: Prioritization of the recommendations



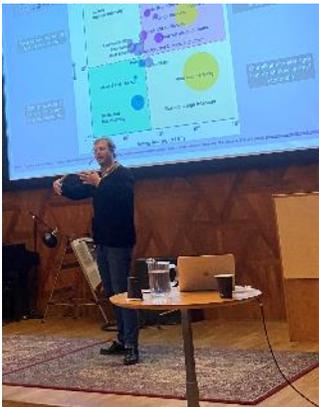
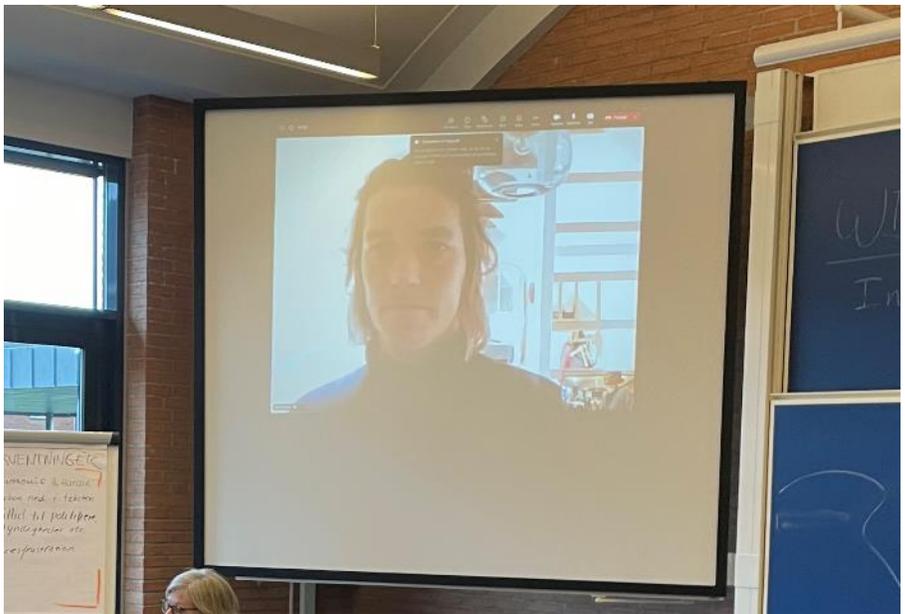


Politicians set the frame and shared visions





Experts presented valuable insights





Dialogue, deliberation and voting



Vision, recommendations and implementation



Vision

*“In a future of sustainable consumption, we take care of each other and our planet. We have organized with much more citizen involvement and co-ownership. Through change, innovation, and development, we have collectively shifted the way we live and consume. The future will be characterized by **courageous, transformative political decisions that significantly change how we consume – from overconsumption to sustainable consumption. The good life will be a life with more nature and tranquility, communities, and better physical and mental health – a life in more balance. In that future, we won't be concerned about whether our consumption is harming the planet.**”*

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Recommendations

- #1 We want taxes that ensure our consumption becomes sustainable.
- #2 Citizens should be more involved - it creates change.
- #3 Much less animal production - much more plant-based.
- #4 It should be much easier to buy and eat sustainably.
- #5 More sustainable and flexible housing options.
- #6 The energy supply in Denmark should consist only of renewable energy sources.
- #7 Public transportation should be sustainable and accessible for everyone.
- #8 Producers should be held responsible for producing, distributing, and disposing of goods in a sustainable manner.
- #9 A new way of life requires new knowledge and skills.
- #10 We want to live green and in renovated buildings.
- #11 More nature and green spaces in cities and in the countryside.
- #12 We want to share, exchange, and reuse - make it easy!
- #13 Less inequality is a prerequisite for sustainable consumption - and also more just.

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Highlights:

#3 “Much less animal production – **much more plant based**”

#4 “...**public cafeterias ... should have plant-based food as the standard and meat as an option...**”

#5 "We need to use **fewer square meters per person in our homes**. We need more flexible housing options, greener homes, more renovations, and fewer new constructions."

#7 "Sustainable transportation should be the **cheapest form of transportation today and the only one tomorrow.**"

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Now what?

- 5 pilot projects
 - Testing new ideas on a small scale
- 10 political decisions
 - Integrating recommendations in a broader sense
- Administrative processing underway
 - Cross-disciplinary idea development (e.g., mobility, construction, food, Circular Economy, procurement)
- Political processing before Christmas
- Pilot projects 2024-2025



Dissemination to other relevant target groups

- Presentations about the project at conferences, etc.
- Debates at the yearly People's Meeting (Folkemødet) and the People's Climate Meeting (Klimafolkemødet)
- Event targeting the Danish Parliament on November 20
- Facilitating competence building on citizen involvement in the green transition (for municipalities and other relevant stakeholders)



Thank you for listening – and questions?

- Read more about [*Circular Economy Beyond Waste*](#)
- Find the [recommendations from the Citizens' Assembly on Sustainable Consumption](#) (*soon in English!*)
- Reach out at dvc@regionh.dk / + 45 29 99 79 43

What kind of input to expect from citizens?

- Citizens are not experts in sustainable consumption (5 weekends)
 - No brilliant new concepts/solutions (maybe a few interesting ideas)
 - No expertise on effective means
 - No detailed designing of solutions
- Citizens are experts in values, dreams for the future, experiences from everyday life...
 - Dedicated, curious and open-minded
 - Draw visions for greener everyday lives
 - Signal a direction to the politicians
 - Induce political courage and vision



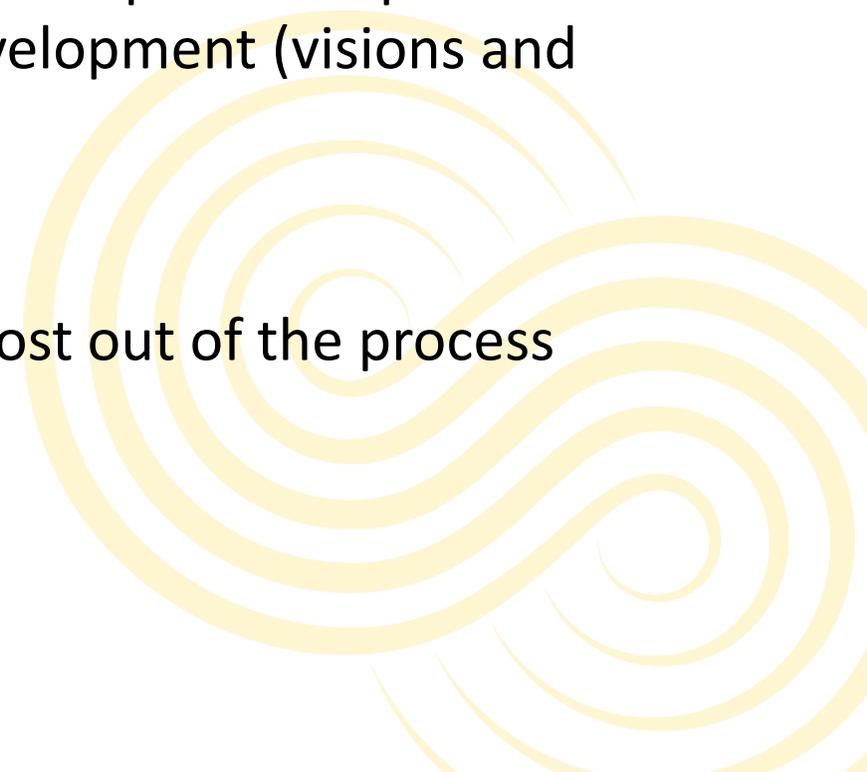
Ideas for a better process next time...

- Less focus on the technical / economic / practical / ... solutions
 - Building material restrictions, carbon pricing, carbon labelling,
- More focus on values, dreams, motivations
- Ultimately this is a challenge of prioritising – of learning to live well within limits:
 - What are our basic human needs? What makes us thrive as human beings?
 - How do different types of consumption contribute to our welfare?
 - How would you prioritise types of consumption within a budget?
 - What could we / would we have to do without?
 - What would we get in return?
 - What would make life worth living within the limits?

Reflections on the citizens' assembly as a method



- Strengths:
 - Recruiting citizens (a representative sample - minimal bias – “real citizens”)
 - Knowledge + dialogue between different perspectives = qualified opinions
 - The citizen perspective is much needed in policy development (visions and courage)
- Room for improvement:
 - More flexibility in the method, in order to get the most out of the process with regard to the particular theme/challenge
 - Maybe combining the best from different methods?
 - Recruiting + Deliberative process
 - Citizens' budgeting?



How to define sustainable consumption?



- Relative sustainability
 - More sustainable than yesterday / the neighbor / the previous technology (electric car vs. petrol car)
 - Improvements without a specific goal
 - "Doing as much as we can"
- Absolute sustainability
 - Only using what is within our safe operating space / fair share of the global "råderum"
 - A budget way of thinking
 - "Doing as much as is necessary"



How to define sustainable consumption?

- Efficiency:
 - How can we reduce the footprint of our current consumption (technological or efficiency improvements)
 - Addressing supply side
- Sufficiency:
 - How much consumption do we need to live good lives?
 - Addressing the demand side
- Relative sustainability + efficiency are mainstream perspectives today
- Absolute sustainability + sufficiency are crucial in succeeding to live well on a finite planet



Internal ownership / ”forankring”

- Political ownership
 - Advisory board – 2 politicians from each organization
 - Following the Citizens’ Assembly and advising We Do Democracy (expert group, political processing of recommendations etc.)
- Administrative ownership
 - 2-5 Group facilitators from each organization (from different departments: Climate, waste, food, transport etc.)
 - Steering committee (management level from each organization – fundamental decisions)



External ownership / ”forankring”

- Broader ownership/awareness in society
 - Advisory Board – 4 external members – a journalist, The climate movement, The trade unions, a professor
 - Presentations about the project – and later the vision & recommendations
 - Hosting debates at Folkemødet and Klimafolkemødet
 - Engaging with other municipalities and regions (and other stakeholders) to share experiences
 - Inviting everyone to use expert presentations from platform
 - Perhaps co-hosting events with other stakeholders?
- Participation platform: <https://baeredygtigtforbrug.borgersamling.dk>