



ACCESS

Achieving Circularity in Cities through
Environmental Sustainability of Sports

A PLATFORM FOR COLLECTION, REPAIR AND REUSE OF SPORTING EQUIPMENT

It's not broken until it
can be repaired



The major objective of this practice and approach is to turn discarded sport items, including equipment and implements, clothes and similar into a resource and give them a second life. By doing so, sports would be more accessible to all social groups and would be more environmentally friendly, too.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

The first Recyclerie Sportive opened in 2015. Originally, the practice was an initiative and an idea of a couple, Marc Bultez and Bérénice Dinet, respectively from the world of sport and the world of waste management. In the early days, Marc Bultez transported second-hand sports equipment to developing countries to allow access to sport in the most disadvantaged areas. The very first boutique-workshop opened its doors in Massy, on the outskirts of Paris, in 2016. Since then, the couple has spread their concept and awareness-raising operations for zero-waste sport across France.

The principle of collecting reusable second-hand equipment and its facilitation obviously requires donors – sport organisations. These donors supply the network of Recycleries across France. To facilitate the collect, the platform provides interested donors with the necessary material for successful and regular collect and pick-up. This kit includes an “Eco-box”, a container made of recycled materials which allows the donor to set up a permanent collection point for the sporting equipment, a manual which would allow the collect to take place in line with the way the Recyclerie works, communication material presenting the Recyclerie and customised communication material which would be tailored made for each donor, highlighting what kind of equipment is collected and other information specific to that particular donor.

Once collected, the sporting equipment and other items arrive to a sorting station where professionals contributing to the Recyclerie platform go through the arrival and sort the items according to their functionality and usability, thus at this stage different items get either repaired and sold, either transformed and merged into other useful items, or dismantled. Once sorted and their destiny defined, the items get redistributed across the country, depending on the needs of the different shops.

When it comes to securing spaces for all these operations and sales, public local and regional authorities play an important role in providing available spaces for setting up such shops.



CHALLENGE

Whether you play or organise sporting events recreationally or professionally, you may have noticed that some sports result in far more waste than others. Things like balls, tennis racket strings, sneakers, uniforms, bats, and helmets are necessities for athletes, but unfortunately, they are not usually built to last forever.

On the other side of the spectrum, there are countless amateur sport organisations, youth teams or individuals who don't have access to the latest generation or simply, quality material and equipment. Amateur sports who rely on volunteers and individual enthusiasts don't attract major sponsors and thus obtaining the material and equipment needed for the organisation can be limited due to finances.

RESULTS

Apart from the obvious reduction of sporting equipment going to waste and thus waste prevention in general, the platform is proud of many other achievements, such as:

- employing 65 people, as well as more than 40 volunteers, interns and similar contracts (from 5-9 months). With its social responsibility, some of the employees are gaining their first working experience or undergoing re-insertion in the labour market.
- The Recyclerie in Massy, the first one that was opened in 2016 collected 5.8 tonnes of sporting equipment in 2022 only. The equipment that was collected was a mix of used, damaged but repairable and unsold items.
- Overall speaking, compared to the five tonnes of material recovered in 2015, the Recyclerie Sportive recycled more than 100 tonnes in 2020.
- The Recyclerie in Massy, on the outskirts of Paris has 1740 members.

Prestigious awards came as a fruit of this work, such as the City of Paris' "Trophée de l'économie sociale et solidaire 2022", P'INS platform's laureate 2020, Recognised actor for sustainable Paris, 2017, "Changed by Sport" by Adidas, 2017, and 2nd place Social Innovation Prize by CD91, 2015.

Finally, when looking at the partnerships and cooperation the Recyclerie has with public authorities, it can be indeed considered as a good enabler for sports to become a part of a circular city.

LESSONS LEARNT

Distances can be challenging, so a good cooperation between similar platforms is essential. As the Recyclerie said, when it comes to cities where they are not established yet, the Recyclerie encourages people to donate to local actors such as the Emmaüs network (a French national association) or similar organisations that specialise in sports,

REPLICABILITY POTENTIAL

Paris (4), Lille, Lyon, Grenoble, Marseille and Bordeaux, shows that the replicability is rather high, and the idea is easy to be multiplied in other cities and countries. With the guidance and training, new locations can considerably contribute to circular economy in those locations by allowing sport organisations to donate used equipment closer to their facilities and also allow a new local community to have access to quality sport equipment.



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This factsheet is a part of a larger collection of good practices available on the project's website

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The **ACCESS project** is one of the latest European projects which explores and challenges environmental sustainability and environmental management in sports. Co-funded by the European Union's Erasmus+ programme, ACCESS is looking at narrowing the gaps between the current environmental performances of sport organisations, their strategies, and practices on one side and strategies and targets of their respective cities or regions with the overall objective – making these sport organisations a reference point for sustainability in sports in their countries and turning them into replicators of solutions for achieving it.



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Co-funded by the
European Union