



Loop project - National research  
**INTERVIEWS:** Entry # 52



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## BIOLOGIST

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Boots with plants, creative Commons license, <https://unsplash.com/photos/eNOlFYUx5ZQ>

### The interviewee's name

is Vesna and she has been working in the Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund since 2007. She's in charge of waste management projects that are necessary but are often opposed by the public (the so-called NIMBY effect - Not In My Back Yard). The work of the sector has always been very challenging, dynamic and multidisciplinary.

### HOW did you discover the opportunities related to reuse?

During my working life, there have been many opportunities of encountering various examples of reuse. Visiting reuse centres is an opportunity to see how beneficial they are for all segments of society. One of the best examples of reuse in our country is Pre-Kom ltd in the city of Prelog in the north of Croatia. In line with the Croatian legislative framework, preparation for reuse is being introduced in the waste management system, while reuse is one of the waste-prevention measures. Reuse of products is any procedure in which a product that was designed and created to fulfil a minimal number of working cycles during its lifetime is used again for the same purpose as originally intended, or for some other purpose, using smaller auxiliary products on the market, or without them.



Plants in cans, creative common license, <https://unsplash.com/photos/dclPEtMvdK8>



In comparison to other waste management methods, when extending the life cycle of products, attempts are made not to use the energy required to manufacture the product, so harmful impact on the environment is considerably reduced.

Environmental benefits of extending the life cycle of products or their parts by prereading for reuse are significant and they represent great potential for reducing GHG emissions calculated as CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The types of waste suitable for reuse are textile, clothing, footwear, electric and electronic appliances, furniture, and consumer goods. Reuse is, not only good for the environment, but also provides more income by producing products, instead of wasting the precious material, or providing a higher quality product for our customers. Above all, reuse takes close to no effort, as it is pretty intuitive.



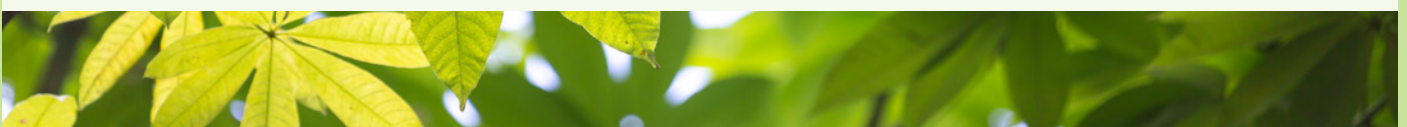
Light bulbs in hanging jars, creative common license, <https://unsplash.com/photos/wylyXRgFIBk>

In modern day companies, reuse is absolutely inevitable if your goal is to make a good product for your customers and a higher profit, but also to fit into today's ecological standards, which are highly important to a serious company's reputation.



Jars, creative common license, <https://unsplash.com/photos/V93cofblunl>

We believe that fact is a good indicator for a greener future, a more compassionate and cooperating society and a greater positivity in both manual and office workers. This idea of optimal productivity was, among first, implemented by Toyota and was later called "lean manufacturing". The lean idea turned out to be useful not only in manufacturing, but management, politics, entrepreneurship and a lot of other areas, so we decided to implement it ourselves.





# WHAT DO YOU REUSE AND HOW:

## can you give us some examples of reuse in your economic activity?

In our company we usually print drafts on the unused side of old papers before printing a final document. We also reuse paper for notes and memos and as a packing material. By reducing, reusing, and recycling your office papers, you will end up with virtually no paper in your garbage bins and will have significantly reduced your ecological footprint.



Flowers in a water bottle, creative common license , <https://unsplash.com/photos/iRVsik9FzGI>

There are no regional reuse centres in Croatia. Some units of local self-government, such as the town of Prelog and the company Humana Nova in Čakovec, Zagreb and Labin have, in cooperation with local self-government units found the spaces where they opened reuse centres. Examples of good practice are second-hand shops that are numerous in the City of Zagreb.

Then there are antique shops, the antiques fair in Britanski trg (Britanski Square in the centre of Zagreb), or sales of used goods at the Hreljić market (on the outskirts of Zagreb), which are all examples of reuse.

A good example are also hand-me-down practices, children's clothing that they have outgrown so the parents give it to friends and acquaintances. There are also web apps looking for or giving something away, the most famous one being "Let go", so that we can say there are different forms of reuse that have their place on the market. At the EU level, there is the international RREUSE network that gathers social enterprises in the sector.



Hanging bottles in dark, creative common license , <https://unsplash.com/photos/D6RyctKZ-dk>

The RREUSE network comprises 30 organisations in 17 European states and the USA, with more than 50,000 employees and 90,000 volunteers.



The view of RREUSE is that Member States have to give priority to reuse in the waste management hierarchy, right after reducing waste by means of prevention activities. They also promote the idea that the reuse goals set in the Waste Framework Directive have to be separated from the recycling goals, so that the progress of Member States in the process of introducing reuse measures could be more easily supported and monitored.



Container for reusable clothes, creative common license, <https://pixabay.com/photos/container-old-clothes-recycling-1130936/>

It is important that we prioritise reuse and repair of products, for example, before starting the process of recycling. It really isn't difficult for us to implement these ideas into reality, as many people think it is. What's most important is to acquire the mindset of reuse, and it all goes smoothly from there.

## LET'S TALK about the real impact of reuse on your turnover: economically speaking, what are these figures?

Realistically that number will only increase over time as everyone gets into the habit. Until then, these figures are not large, but on an annual basis we can talk about significant savings.

Reuse provides an excellent, environmentally-preferred alternative to other waste management methods, because it reduces air, water and land pollution, and limits the need for new natural resources, such as timber, petroleum, fibers and other materials to make new products. It saves energy (by reducing energy and water consumption) and can therefore reduce bills. It saves considerable landfill space too. You can save you money through more efficient use of raw materials, packaging and technology. It allows you to cut your waste disposal costs.



Easter decorations,  
Karmen Prelogović

Besides causing less pollution than recycling or making new products from new materials, it also makes the needed products available to those who can't afford to buy them new, while generating jobs and business activity that contribute to the economy.

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Historically, financial motivation was one of the main drivers of reuse. In the developing world this driver can lead to very high levels of reuse, however rising wages and consequent consumer demand for the convenience of disposable products has made the reuse of low value items such as packaging uneconomic in richer countries, leading to the demise of many reuse programs.



Reusable jars, creative common license, <https://www.pexels.com/photo/person-holding-clear-glass-jar-with-white-and-brown-beans-9324384/>

Current environmental awareness is gradually changing attitudes and regulations, such as the new packaging regulations, are gradually beginning to reverse the situation. One example of conventional reuse is the doorstep delivery of milk in glass bottles; other examples include the retreading of tires and the use of reusable plastic boxes, shipping containers, instead of single-use corrugated fiberboard boxes. There are also many reuse centers and virtual exchanges available.

These services facilitate the transaction and redistribution of unwanted, yet perfectly usable, materials and equipment from one entity to another. The entities that benefit from either side of this service can be businesses, nonprofits, schools, community groups, and individuals. Virtual exchanges do not have physical space or trucks, but instead allow users to post listings of materials available and wanted (for free or at low cost) on an online materials exchange website.



Reusable straws, creative common license, <https://www.pexels.com/photo/food-wood-sand-dry-4856430/>

# REUSE

# QUESTIONNAIRE

## 1. What is the so-called “circular economy”?

A	B	C
25	3	2

## 2. Do you believe that a more sustainable economic system can be equally productive than the current one?

A	B	C
10	11	9

## 3. Which of these consumer choices have you decided to implement in the last 10 years to protect the environment?

A	B	C
10	4	16

## 4. How will the so-called “circular economy” affect the job market?

A	B	C
4	13	13

## 5. In your work, how many strategic choices related to sustainability have been made in the last 10 years?

A	B	C
10	8	12



**6. Which of these 4 “Rs” is more important to ensure a better future for humanity?**

A	B	C	D
7	9	11	3

**7. Which of these 4 “Rs” is most present in your family’s daily life?**

A	B	C	D
8	7	13	2

**8. In your opinion, what link is there between technology and the “circular economy”?**

A	B	C
19	9	2

**9. Do you think we will be able to change the way we consume so as not to affect the environment and its limited resources?**

A	B	C
10	7	13

**10. Are you familiar with the UN 2030 Agenda or have you ever heard of SDGs?**

A	B	C
14	5	11

## QUESTIONNAIRE



# QUESTIONNAIRE

**11. Do you think that the economy in the past was more sustainable than it is today?**

A	B	C
23	2	5

**12. Which of these 3 statements do you consider the most true and important?**

A	B	C
10	13	7

