



The contribution of social enterprises to inclusive circular skills

**Workshop: Skills & training for successful and inclusive
transition, EPR 2023 Conference, Mulhouse France**

Simone Schirru, Policy Officer (Social and Economic Policies)

simone.schirru@rreuse.org

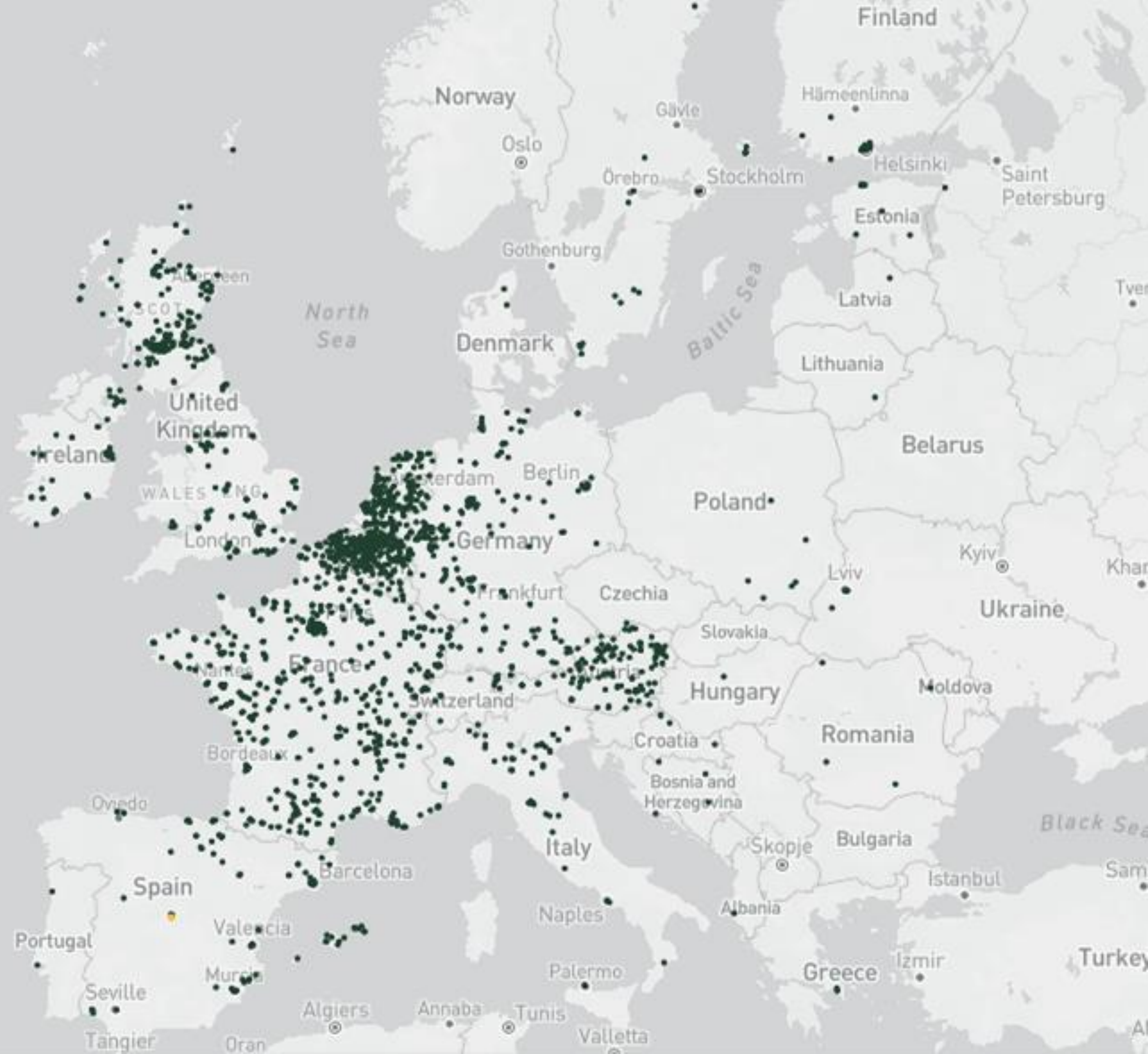


RREUSE is the international network representing social enterprises active in re-use, repair and recycling.



Picture credit: De Kringwinkel (1, 2,4) AERESS (3) Humana Nova (5)

37 members
32 countries



Innovative approach to skills development

Where...

- A **throwaway culture** has replaced traditional practices of re-use and repair.
- Needed manual skills required for the green transition are now in decline.



- **Social enterprises** have been active in the circular economy for decades, using **reuse and repair activities as vehicles** to create job and training opportunities **for the most vulnerable**.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISES' CONTRIBUTION TO
CIRCULAR SKILLS OPEN TO ALL

Preservation of
circular skills

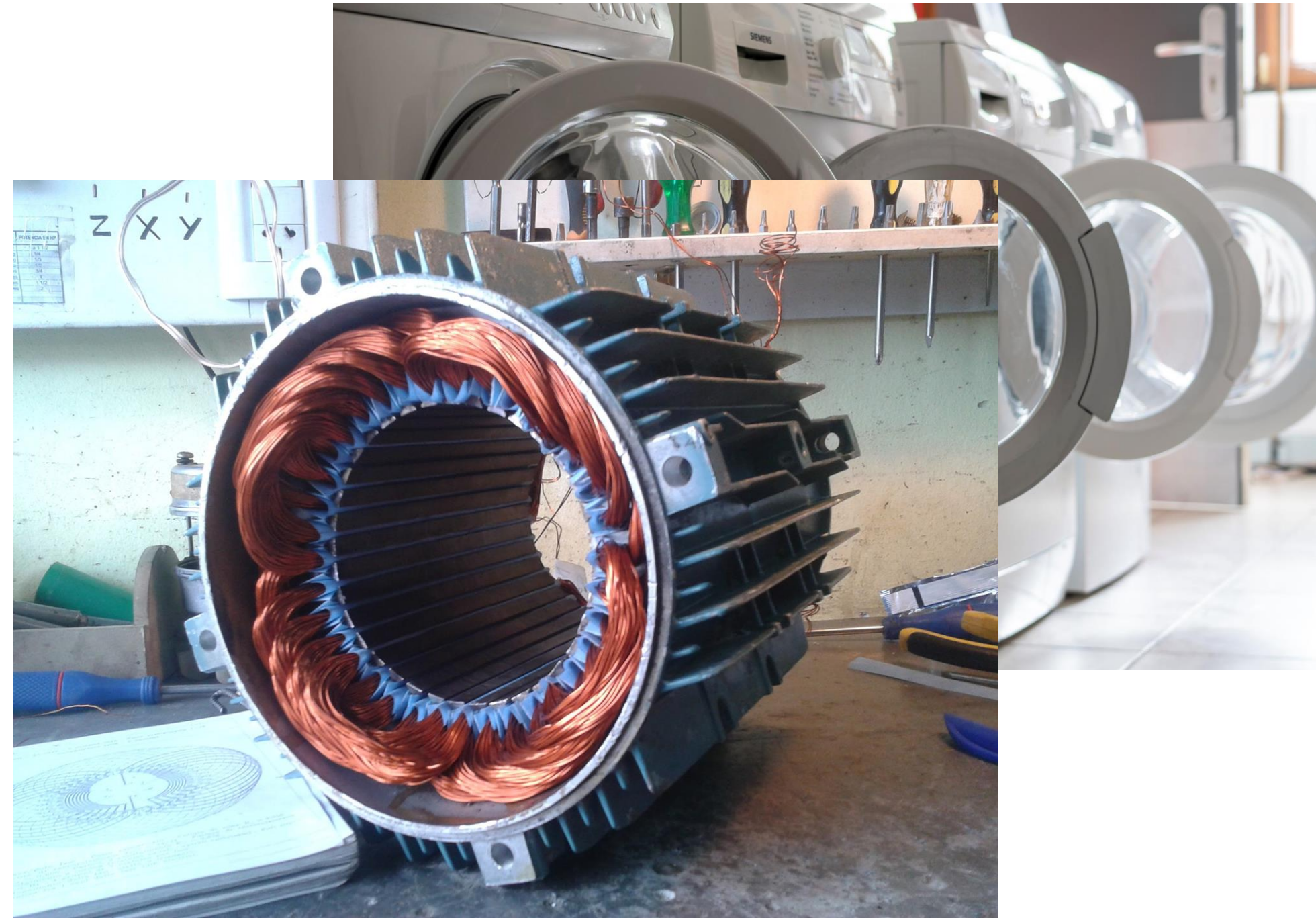
Work-based
training
opportunities

Adapted training
and personalised
support

Preservation of circular skills

LE HUBLLOT (Belgium) – WINDING OF COPPER WIRES OF AN ENGINE

- **Main expertise in the repair of electrical appliances** (washing machines, dishwashers, and so forth).
- Only centre in Wallonia with expertise in the **repair of the winding of copper wires that connect components of electrical engines.**
- **Transferable skills** (also applicable to industries such wind turbines, trams, etc.).
- Currently cheaper to buy a new electrical engine when it can be repaired.



DEAF ENTERPRISES (Ireland) – REUPHOLSTERY OF FURNITURE

- Ireland's only dedicated employer of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.
- Preserve traditional skills such as **upholstery of furniture.**
- **Bicycle repair**, ability to inspect the overall condition of a bicycle, diagnose and repair mechanical problems.



Work-based
training
opportunities

ROSCOMMON WOMEN'S NETWORK (Ireland) – CYCLEUP PROGRAMME

- RWN started from scratch a training programme for **all women** in the upcycling of textiles.
- Final deliverable - **complete 2 upcycled items from scratch.**
- Hands-on approach ensuring that participants **learn all the practical skills required in the sector.**



ZIEDINE EKONOMIKA (Lithuania) – ASSESSING THROUGH WORKSHOPS

- Organises workshops for unemployed people with disabilities for textile and furniture-related circular skills.
- Individual training plan and workshops at the core of training.
- Partnerships with the private sector, allowing participants to spend a day on the ground and understand of potential job roles.



Adapted training
and personalised
support

BAUKARUSSELL (Austria) - CERTIFICATION OF SKILLS

- A **short and focused programme to train on the construction sector** created with the needs of disadvantaged individuals in mind.
- Participants will familiarise with **safe deconstruction and demolition practices**, such as the use of proper tools and safety gear, and the appropriate disposal of hazardous material, **which requires both theoretical and practical training.**



HUMANA NOVA (Croatia) – CREATING A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

- **Individual work plans. Rotation through different workplaces** and after 2 months, assessment of skills.
- Social workers providing support in **strengthening self-confidence, trust, and tolerance** via personalised support.
- **Monthly informal meetings and communal activities** to create a safe and supportive environment.



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Promotion of digital skills, including those needed to power the circular economy

Examples of transferable skills:

- Basic digital skills such as **browsing the internet, creating, and using an email account, and using spreadsheets.**
- Not only to seek employment but have transferable into personal life (e.g. keeping in touch with family).
- **More advanced digital skills to power the re-use sector include:** route planning for the collection of reusable goods, online reviews of resale value, inventory control systems, e-commerce, and so forth.



Policy lessons from RREUSE:

Foster demand for circular skills across sectors.

Ensure integration of social enterprises within labour market policy.

Foster partnerships with public and private sector, including VET providers.

Addressing lack of data on the social economy.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

More flexible approach in skills recognition to foster a work-based and inclusive approach on skills.

Raise visibility of ESF+ and other funding schemes that support the skills work of social enterprises.

Promoting initiatives to adapt academic curricula to reflect green social entrepreneurship concepts.

Expand national and EU classifications of skills to include all repair and re-use skills of the circular economy.

New RREUSE report: Putting people and skills at the core of the circular economy.

- 18 case studies from social enterprises of the wider RREUSE network.
- Raise visibility and ensure higher recognition of members' work as inclusive adult learning and lifelong learning opportunity providers.
- Highlights policy opportunities and challenges in setting up training programmes, coming from the members that took part in the report.

Available in the RREUSE website.



THANK YOU.

Simone Schirru,
Policy Officer in Social and Economic Policies
simone.schirru@rreuse.org

