

The logo features a green circular arrow on the left, pointing upwards and to the right. To its right, the word "REFRAME" is written in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter "E" is stylized with a green outline and a white fill, while the other letters are solid black.

REFRAME

**Circular Economy strategy FRAMEwork
for sustainable SMEs**

IO3: Circular Economy Implementation Framework (CE Framework)

Disclaimer:

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SIGMA



3.3 Political factors

Political feasibility is related to both opportunities and barriers to the adoption of circularity in organisations and companies. The political leadership of a country, or an entity such as the European Union, can contribute both to the promotion of the implementation of the Circular Economy and its non-implementation.

Initially what we know is that the evolution of the CE scientific knowledge was based on the political geographies of China and developed countries, especially within the European Union. Gradually, the concept of the CE is emerging in new political geographies. Governments from such countries, like Nigeria and South Africa, have been working with the European Union's World Economic Forum to establish the African Alliance on Circular Economy.

In 2015, the European Commission adopted its first CE Action Plan, which included measures to help stimulate Europe's transition towards a CE, boost global competitiveness, foster sustainable economic growth, and generate new jobs. By 2019, the first CE action plan was fully completed and was adopted in 2020, by the European Commission. It includes a Global CE Action Plan, which confirms that the EU will continue to lead the way to a circular economy at the global level and use its influence, expertise, and financial resources to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the EU and beyond. The new CE Action Plan is one of the main building blocks of the European Green Deal¹ Europe's new agenda for sustainable growth.

According to the "Paving the way for a circular economy: insights on status and potentials" report, published by the European Environment Agency, the regulations are insufficient. Many governments state that they are working on adopting CE initiatives, however, they use regulations basically for recycling, energy recovery and waste management while the CE is much more than these, such as reuse and eco-design. Further, the political changes that take place in a country, whether many or few in a period, resulting in the change of political initiatives in all sectors, including the CE. From time to time, there has been a shift in priorities based on election results and new governments in many - if not all - EU countries.

Towards exploring the political environment, an SME operator should look for the current European Union policy on the CE, to understand its position concerning the country where it operates. In this direction, it is important to read and understand the EU's new Circular Action Plan and more specifically the actions (https://ec.europa.eu/environment/pdf/circular-economy/implementation_tracking_table.pdf) and the Policy areas that apply to the sector ([Chemicals](#), [Circular economy](#), [Circular economy at the global level](#), [Industry](#),

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

[Plastics](#), [Sustainable development](#), [Waste and recycling](#)). This will allow the SME operator to answer the following critical questions:

- Does the country of the establishment have any regulations regarding CE? If yes, do they apply to the type of organisation and industry?
- Is there a government agency that guides the SMEs and aims to promote CE and help businesses in their transition from a linear to a circular model? If yes, seek the proper agency office and get any help you may need.

In addition, the SME operator should search for national funding opportunities, for which the national government is responsible and/or EU funding opportunities, for which the EU together with the national government are responsible.