

# CIRCLE – DIGITAL

## Implementation seminar for Project Beneficiaries

Interreg VI-A IPA Greece – Albania 2021-2027

Tuesday 17th of June 2025

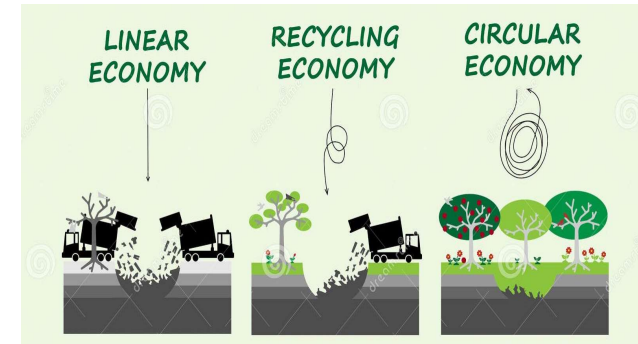
MA/JS Premises, Thessaloniki

The PROGRAMME is co-funded by the European Union and by National Funds of Greece & Albania



## First Steps

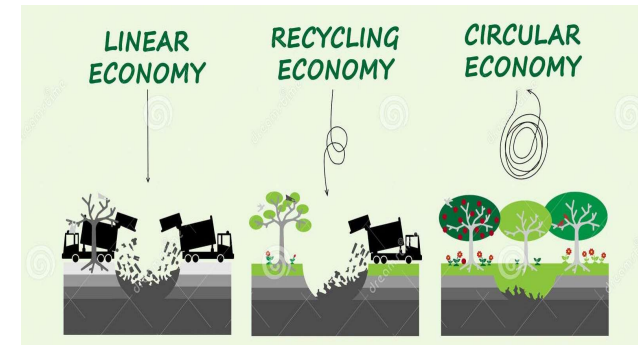
- Review all contractual obligations that result from the **Subsidy Contract & Partnership Agreement** and ensure that they are well understood;
- Ensure that each beneficiary understands rules and procedures of the **Greece-Albania Programme** along with the requirements of the **National Rules** Applicable in each country;
- Draft a **communication plan** establishing communication procedures, both internal and external;



## First Steps

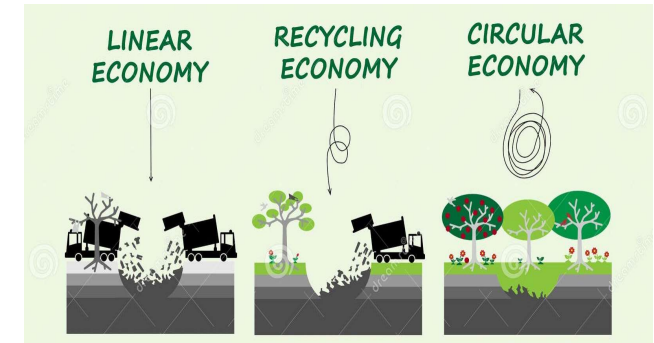
Within the first month following the signature of the Subsidy Contract

- Set up the Project Management Team (PMT);
- Set up the internal project teams (each PB);
- Plan a kick-off meeting with all beneficiaries, in order to timely launch the project.



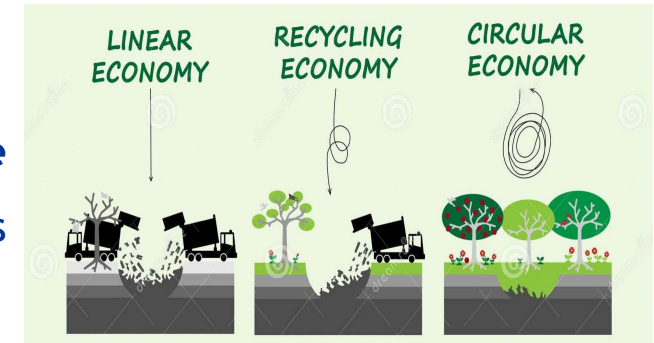
## First Steps

- MIS credentials (for all partners/ users per PP)
- Mailing list and contact information for all PPs
- Decisions of designated bodies for implementation
- Audit trail system (traceability)
- Open an Interest-free Bank account in EUR



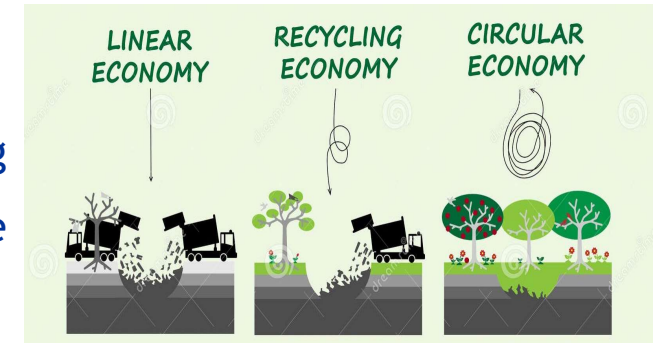
## First Steps

- Maintain a separate accounting system or an adequate accounting code, in order to clearly trace project costs/revenues by budget line, activity and payment date/reporting period;
- Set-up monitoring systems, adequate internal controls and a good document archiving system;
- Indicate the project title/acronym on the invoices/equivalent documents and on all supporting documents;



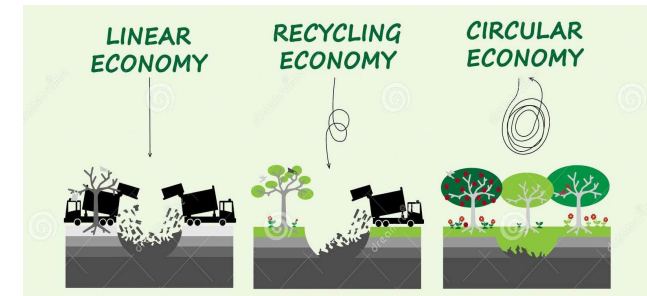
## First Steps

- Plan Activities per Project Partner, in terms of actual starting and ending date of each deliverable and in compliance with the proposed Procurement Plan;
- Recruit necessary staff (where required);
- Launch the most urgent procurement procedures (Management);
- Sound financial planning to prevent cash flow problems.



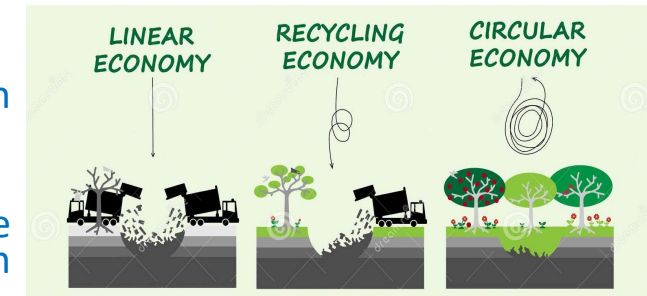
## First Steps

- Preparation costs
  - Staff, T&A, EES/ Up to 30k/ Pref. paid and reported in the 1<sup>st</sup> FLC
  - O&A not eligible as PC
- Set up milestones & review
- Prepare Procurement Plan & StartUp plan (9 months ahead)



## Responsibilities of LP

- ✓ Is responsible for the overall coordination, management and implementation of the project vis-à-vis the MA.
- ✓ Ensures that the expenditure by the beneficiaries has been incurred for the purpose of implementing the project as specified in the approved Application Form.
- ✓ Ensures that the expenditure by the beneficiaries has been verified by the controllers.
- ✓ Open an interest free bank account to a commercial bank, dedicated to the project. Receives and transfers IPA contribution to project beneficiaries who are located in Albania (**not applicable for the Ministry of Environment and Energy for DIGITAL**)
- ✓ Prepares and submits all necessary documents to the JS/MA (e.g. progress reports, modification requests)



## Cash Flow

### Budget allocation to GR Beneficiaries

Registration to Public Investment Programme (ΠΔΕ) **(automatically)**

Funding allocation request to the JS via MIS **(Section 4.4 Partner Payment Claim)**

JS approves and forward to the Ministry of Economy & Finance the requests via MIS

Approval of the requests and allocation of funds



## Cash Flow

### Important info for GR Beneficiaries

1. The beneficiaries whose payment is INDIRECT (επιχορήγηση), the funds are transferred by the Regional Development Fund to a NEW bank account, at the commercial bank, opened exclusively for the Project. This bank account must be Interest Free.
2. The GR beneficiaries have to proceed to all programmed payments within 4 months the latest after the funds are allocated. Otherwise, the funds may be withdrawn
3. Moreover, the GR beneficiaries have to upload & submit their expenditures on the MIS, frequently

**For any new Funding Allocation Requests, no 2 & 3 points must be met. Also,**

- ✓ **There must be enough credit at the, in force, PIP \_ *CHECK & INFORM THE JS***
- ✓ **The request must be well justified**

## Cash Flow

### Transfer of Pre-financing to the Albanian Beneficiaries

- The Albanian beneficiaries have the right to request a pre-financing. The amount cannot exceed the 25% of IPA contribution of its budget.

#### Example

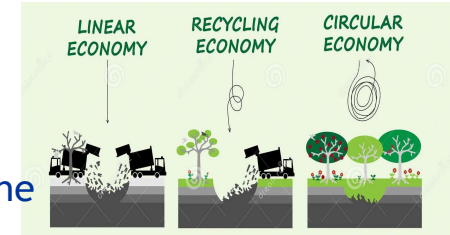
Total Eligible Beneficiary Budget: 200.000,00€

IPA Contribution: 160.000,00€

Maximum pre-financing amount:  $160.000,00 \times 25\% = 40.000,00€$

#### Conditions:

- ✓ Issue of the Letter of Guarantee by SASPAC
- ✓ Opening of a bank account, dedicated to the project (guidance by SASPAC)
- ✓ Submission of an official pre-financing request to LB, accompanied by the Financial Identification Form (FIF) (signed and stamped). At the request, the following must be referred:
  - ✓ Beneficiary
  - ✓ Project title and acronym
  - ✓ Bank
  - ✓ Account's title (π.χ. EUROPE - Municipality of ...)
  - ✓ Co-financing budget and requested amount
  - ✓ IBAN & Swift Code



## Cash Flow

### Transfer of Pre-financing to the Albanian Beneficiaries

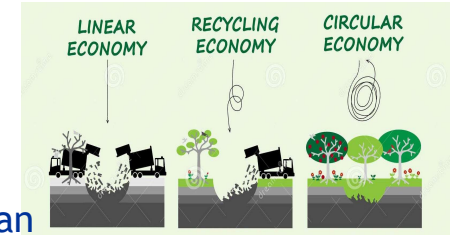
1. The **LB** submits to the **JS/MA** an official request regarding the pre-financing of the Albanian Beneficiary, accompanied by an official bank document indicating the bank, IBAN and SWIFT code, of the account the LB has opened. At the request the following must be referred:

- Project title and acronym
- The requested amount
- The bank, IBAN & Swift Code

2. The **JS/MA** submits a request for the pre-financing of the Albanian Beneficiaries to the **Certifying Authority**

3. The pre-financing amount is credited by the General Accounting Office of the State to **LB's bank account**

4. The **LB** transfers the pre-financing amount to the Albanian Beneficiary's bank account, within **30 days without any deductions**

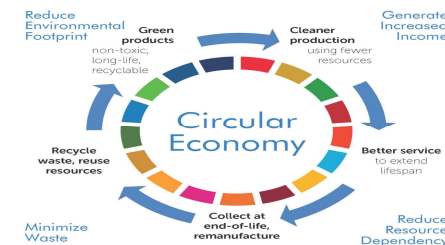
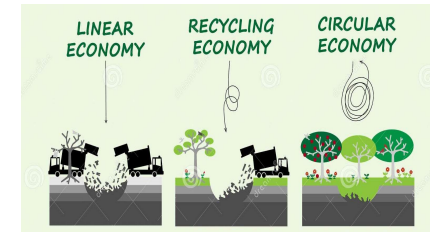


## Cash Flow

### Verification of costs and reimbursement

All the additional payments are directly connected to the Verification of Expenditures

1. CVE issued ->
2. Approved and included in Payment Claim to the EC->
3. Funds returned to CA ->
4. Funds for Albanian partners transferred to the LB ->
5. LP transfers the IPA contribution to the Albanian Beneficiary's bank account, within 30 days, without any deductions. Any bank charges borne the LB and are eligible as long as they are foreseen at the approved project budget
6. The Lead Beneficiary informs the Certifying Authority and the JS by sending an formal letter accompanied by the relevant bank document.



## Amortization of advance payment

From each payment to the Albanian beneficiaries after the date of receipt of the advance payment, an amount will be deducted in order to partially depreciate it.

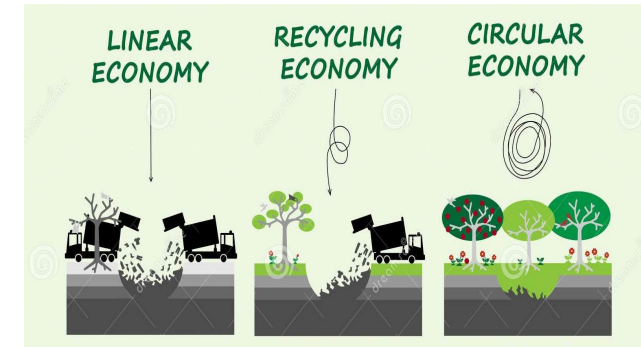
This amount will be calculated with a percentage P(%), applicable to the amount of the payment, resulting from the function  $P(\%) = a/B * 2$

- **a** is for the amount of the advance payment (EU contribution)
- **B** is for the budget of the Beneficiary at the time the advance payment is given (EU contribution)
- **2** is a standard factor used in order to fully depreciate the advance payment when 50% of the beneficiary's approved budget is absorbed.

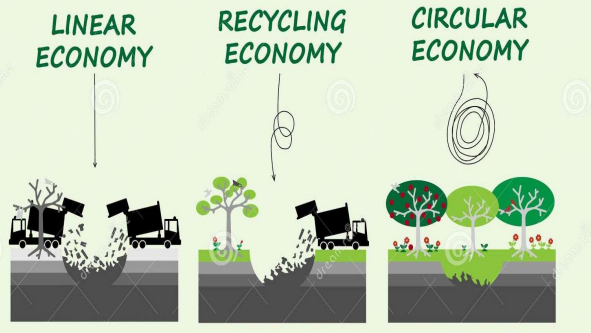
As a result, each time, the payment to the IPA beneficiary will be

$$VE * (100\% - P\%)$$

- **VE** is for verified expenditures



## Verification of Costs



### Greece: Centralized

Sample-based verification of costs

Verified by Unit C of the MA

### Albania: Centralized

Sample-based verification of costs

FLC Office in SASPAC



**Make a tight FLC plan and stick to it**

**\*\* Have your costs verified as often as possible \*\***



## Monitoring & Progress Reports



MONITORING

- Objectives
- Results
- Outputs
- Indicators
- Expenditure



REPORTING

## Progress Reports

### Submitted twice a year

- One by the end of July (for period 01/01-30/06)
- One by the end of January (for period 01/07-31/12)

### Interim Reporting

- As requested by the JS
- FLC and financial forecast
- Financial estimates

## Project Modifications

### General aspects

- Pre-assessed by Project Officer
- Up to 1 MOD/semester
- Call limits respected at all times
- Submitted prior to FLC, in case of budget reallocations
- Requested during project lifetime
- Submitted by the LB
- Standard form

## Project Modifications

### Approved by the JS

- **Administrative Information in the Application Form**
- **Modification of bank accounts**
- **Adjustments in the Justification of Budget** that do not affect the scope of the project nor any information in the approved Application Form
- **Adjustments in the workplan, such as start and end dates of activities/ work packages** and of their respective deliverables, without affecting the end date of the project
- **Reallocation** between budget categories and/or work packages up to 20% of the total project budget, not affecting the total BEN budget, the project scope and results and the approved Procurement Plan

## Project Modifications

### Approved by the MA

- Changes in the work plan without an impact on the approved total project budget
- Extension of end date, not affecting the target set by the n+3 rule. Should not exceed **50% of the initial duration**
- Reallocation between budget lines and/or between work packages over 20% of the total project budget, not affecting the total beneficiary's budget
- Reallocation of resources between beneficiaries from the **same country (not affected project total budget, budget distribution per country) \***
- Amounts from **discounts/savings/unspent amounts (only duly justified cases)**

**>>>\* Amendment to the SC and PA (if appl.)**

## Project Modifications

### Approved by the MC

- Reallocation of resources between beneficiaries from **different countries (within approved budget)**
- Changes in the work plan with an impact on the approved total project budget/ Addition of new activities that will bring added value to the project.
- Modification of the partnership with replacement of withdrawing beneficiary
- Modification of the composition of the partnership without replacement of withdrawing beneficiary (rest to undertake the activities, in case of core activities)
- Addition of new beneficiaries leading to the increase of the output, results and budget of the project

**>>> Amendment to the SC (if appl.) and PA**

## Project Modifications

### Other types of modification

- **Following legal succession (LB sends legislation imposing this modification. No further evaluation by the JS required)**
- **Special cases of take over**
- **Modifications related to public contracts**

## Project Modifications

### Procedure for approval of project modification

- ❖ Consent of the Joint Project Management Team (JPMT) – minutes, e-mail etc.
- ❖ Application Form adjusted with proposed changes, accompanied by supporting documents
  - Request for project modification (Standard form)
  - Budget modification sheet (Standard form)
  - In case of administrative changes, updated “Partner Details Form” (Section C of the Application Form on MIS).
  - Modified Justification of Budget (JoB)
  - Any other supporting document applicable to the requested change

## Project Modifications

### Changes in the Partnership

- Prior information of the JS in writing incl. justification
- Consent of the JPMT
- Official request by e-mail
- Request for project modification (Standard form)
- Budget modification sheet (Standard form)
- JPMT consent
- Modified Justification of Budget (JoB)
- Supporting documents, incl. eligibility documents foreseen in the Call (per type of BEN)

**JS-> MA -> MC**

**Upon MC approval, UPDATED AF on MIS**

# Thank you for your attention!

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IPA Greece – Albania

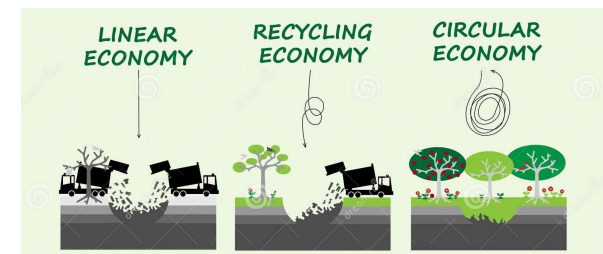


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